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almost deserted, except for women going on visits or on business and young children noisily engaged in their games. By sunset the roads leading to the village become busy and crowded with villagers and cattle returning home, who in their hurried endeavour to get their evening meal raise the dense cloud of dust that characterizes the agricultural roads and the village streets during this hour. Some time later, the village witnesses the general exodus of women and girls from the village towards the Nile to fill their water jars, while the men sprawl outside the houses or cluster round a wood-fire in the guest house on cold nights to exchange news, smoke their tobacco and engage in gossip.

In portraying some of the features of the rustic setting and life in Silwa, a question emerges: to what extent is this village under study typical of the rural conditions in Egypt? To such a question an objective answer is almost impossible, considering the fact that there are five thousand large villages and twenty thousand hamlets (izbahs) in Egypt. The writer can only claim with confidence that Silwa is typical of the majority of villages in the province of Aswan. There are certainly differences from one province to another, with regard to the degree of urbanization, the infiltration of agencies of social change such as schools, means of communication, newspapers and radio. On the whole, Aswan, being the farthest province from the metropolis, could be considered relatively the least affected by such factors. It is also known as one of the poorest provinces, as the Nile Valley reaches its narrowest stretch in the south (with the exception of the district of Kom Ombo). Moreover, Silwa, as will be seen later, is composed mainly of small landowners. There are many other villages throughout Egypt where the inhabitants are mainly tenants or part-owners and part-tenants, while many others work as hired labour.[1] With the exception of Kom Ombo, the majority of the land in Aswan produces subsistence crops, while in other provinces cash crops such as cotton and sugar-cane may be the main agricultural crop.

At this juncture it is important to point out one of the striking differences between most of the provinces of Upper Egypt down to Beni Suef and the other provinces, especially in the Delta. This is while women in the former provinces go about veiled and do not actually work on the fields, those in the latter are neither veiled nor debarred from active work on the farm. The writer cannot satisfactorily account for such a difference and knows of no source that has tackled this question. Is it merely a result of some historical or racial difference between the two parts of the country? Has it some connection with cotton culture and the perennial irrigation which are mainly predominant in the North?[2] Is it an expression of some

[1] See A. Ammar, op. cit.

[2] The cultivation of cotton requires not only a dense population, but one with a birth rate above the average. Charles Issawi, *Egypt—An Economic and Social Analysis*, London, 1947. In the light of this, female labour was perhaps essential for the economic activities in those provinces.

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major cultural variation between these regions? Or is it a combination of these factors? At present the writer finds himself unable to settle such an issue.

In conclusion, it is extremely difficult to show the extent to which Silwa is a typical Egyptian village. All that can be claimed is that Silwa at least represents one of the village types prevailing in Upper Egypt. It also reflects in its community life some of the national problems of population pressure, of agricultural economy, malnutrition, and slow rate of accepting government-sponsored programmes as evidenced by instances of resistance and evasion which will be discussed later.

If, however, no single concrete statement about Silwa applies to other villages in Upper Egypt, the writer can tentatively assume that through the diversity of details there runs a common outlook and ethos of life and that very few differences obtain with regard to the cultural values and the aims and methods of socialization.[1]

Silwa, however, was not primarily chosen for a field-work investigation for its 'typicalness' or otherwise, and the writer must admit that 'the prime mover' for this selection was his personal connection with the village. In it he was born and brought up till the age of seven, when he left to receive his primary-school education in Aswan, his secondary education in Sohaj, province of Jirja, and his university course in Cairo. Throughout his life he has never severed his contacts with his birthplace as he used to stay there during summer holidays and the short-term vacations. The writer lived in close emotional, spiritual and intellectual touch with the villagers, a position which has its merits and demerits for such a study.

The choice of such a village was also appropriate as it presents a convenient starting point for a first study of this kind, as the village is relatively isolated and homogeneous where the traditional culture is presumably better preserved than others in more contact with city life. With fewer social sub-divisions, with no complexity of social classes, of differential functions and of division of labour, and with the dominance of universals and a minimum of alternatives and specialities in social behaviour, such a community is more amenable to study for a single investigator.[2]

With no problem of learning the language or even the dialect, the six months of field work were fairly adequate to carry out such an investigation.

[1] For the substantiation or modification of such a statement, research in other Provinces has to be considered. The gap in such studies has been felt by many scholars. 'The Near and Middle East can show practically no contributions to these studies.' Margaret Read, *Education and Cultural Tradition*, London, 1951, p. 20. 'No Moslem writer, in either medieval or modern times, has condescended to describe the organization of village life in his country.' H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part 1, London, 1950, p. 5.

[2] The terms 'universals, alternatives and specialities' have been introduced by R. Linton and are used here in the same way. See his book *The Study of Man*, New York, 1948, pp. 272–4. R. Firth refers to the value of concentrated observation of small-unit behaviour, a type of study for which he suggests the term micro-sociology, in *Elements of Social Organization*, London, 1951.

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Introduction

THEORETICAL LEADS AND METHODS OF THE STUDY

[2]

THIS is a study of the social and psychological aspects of education in a village community in which an interdisciplinary approach has been adopted. For the sociological part which forms the main body of the book, the writer has attempted to utilize many of the conceptual categories and methods usually employed in studies of total culture which aims at creating out of the diverse pieces of human realities 'a coherent representation of a society, in terms of the general principles of organization and motivation that regulate behaviour in it'.[1] To achieve this purpose, many of the theoretical assumptions utilized in research in Anthropology and Sociology have been applied, for 'there can be no valuable empirical observations without the lead of a theory'.[2] There is no claim of originality in the theoretical leads of this work, as the writer only attempted to examine 'how finely some tools given by wiser men might cut'. It is becoming increasingly important in any research to satisfy three main requirements; the first is to make explicit one's own assumptions that guided the work; the second is to describe the methods and techniques used; and the third is the extent to which one's ideas and methods have undergone change during the actual work, for research is equally a learning process for the person conducting it.[3]

Throughout the book the cultural approach has been the dominant one. The appreciation of 'culture' as a phenomenon *sui generis* and its explanatory value for the understanding of human behaviour have been one of the major achievements of modern anthropology.[4] There is no need here

[1] Meyer Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, London, 1945, Foreword, p. vii.
[2] B. Malinowski, in his preface to A. Richards, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Society*, London, 1932, p. xi.
[3] Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, New Haven, 1941, p. 6.
[4] In such a statement, it is recognised that the continuity of culture does not depend upon the existence of any particular individuals. Clyde Kluckhohn and William Kelly, 'The Concept of Culture', *The Science of Man*, New York, 1946, pp. 78–106. However, there need be no contradiction between viewing culture as organic or personalistic and

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to discuss the development of this concept of culture; it is sufficient only to state the ways in which the term is to be used. Wherever possible, the writer has tried to perceive culture at its three levels, the functional, the historical and the psychological.

What Malinowski expressed as the functional point of view is concerned with the interrelatedness of the various institutions, social structures, artifacts, mental and moral disciplines in the life of the human group studied. The functional approach is basically 'holistic', and culture is conceived as an integral in which the various items are interdependent.[1] As the social system is not an aggregate, but an integrated whole, 'the function of a particular usage is the contribution it makes to the total social life as the functioning of the total social system'.[2]

The second level of 'culture' is the historical; time being as important as space. Temporal factors and historical determinants have been taken into account by many of the present-day 'functionalists' for the understanding of the social present and of the phenomena of social change.[3] [175] It would have been of great value if there had been historical records about the village under study; there are even no past statistics that might indicate the historical development of such social items as population, resources, division of land and the like. For the villagers, history is mainly [173] what is contained in the memories of the living generations through oral transmission, or what is communicated by the literate section of the community, e.g. smatterings of the history of the Arabs, the Prophet and the Saints. It is obvious, however, that the village cannot be considered as a self-contained structural unit but has to be related to the forces of the national history and their repercussions, if any, on the village.[4]

In dealing with the psychological level of culture, the trend is not so clear, since this approach is relatively recent. Moreover, the issue concerning the extent to which a sociological study of this kind should extend its inquiry into the psychological field has not been fully accepted.[5] Added

as super-organic or impersonalistic, provided we are aware that they are two different levels of abstraction, with the former being prior to the latter logically and genetically. David Bidney, 'Human Nature and the Cultural Process', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLIX, 1947, p. 580.

[1] B. Malinowski, article 'Culture' in *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* and in *Scientific Theory of Culture*, University of North Carolina Press, 1944.

[2] Radcliffe-Brown, quoted by E. Evans-Pritchard, *Social Anthropology*, London, 1951, p. 54.

[3] E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., p. 60. For a criticism of the extreme functionalists who ignore the historical dimension see A. Victor Murray, 'The Limits of Functional Anthropology', in *Overseas Education*, Vol. X, 1938–9, pp. 41–5, and Max Gluckman, 'An Analysis of the Sociological Theories of Bronislow Malinowski', *Rhodes Livingstone Papers*, No. 16, O.U.P., 1949.

[4] Julian H. Steward, *Area Research* (Social Research Science Council), New York, 1950, p. 22.

[5] The British school of Anthropology, in contrast with the American school, is on the whole reluctant to include the 'subjective' psychological phenomena of 'culture' in its

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to this, is the fact that there is no single system of psychology which one could apply with scientific assurance; and even experimental psychology contains an air of unreality and artificiality with regard to cultural and social behaviour.[1] Yet the increasing attempts for rapprochement between the social sciences as an ideal to be achieved, as evidenced in the challenging literature already written, made the writer convinced of the value of an integrative approach in his study.[2]

Nadel, for instance, maintains that both the functional and historical approaches to culture imply, to a greater or lesser degree, the influence of psychological phenomena, but that in neither of them is the part played by psychology in human culture explicitly and openly recognized.[3] Moreover, many of the American anthropologists assert that 'there is more to any culture than meets the eye', and that the 'functionalists' have only confined themselves to the 'overt' or 'explicit' aspects of culture that lie open to observation. The data of culture, however, contain 'feelings', 'thoughts', and 'motivations' for which they suggested terms such as 'covert' or 'implicit' culture which is not synonymous with 'subjective'.[4] In this way society is likened to the individual, the understanding of whom does not only depend on what he can tell us, or what he knows about himself, but equally on what he is reticent about and what he does not know about himself, which is an important factor in his personality.[5]

The recent interest in the psychological phenomena of culture has produced a specific type of approach called the 'typological or characterological', expressed mainly in the writings of Mead, Benedict, and Bateson. The three writers in their statements have attempted to establish an analogy between the variations between cultural selectivity and the individuals' temperaments, thus bringing problems of psychology to the foreground in sociological research. According to Mead, 'each simple homogeneous culture can give scope only to a few of the varied human endowments, disallowing or penalizing others too antithetical to its major emphases to find room in its walls. Having originally taken its values from

orbit of inquiry and prefers to keep the two disciplines separate. See E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit.

[1] F. C. Bartlett, 'Psychological Methods and Anthropological Problems' in *Africa*, Vol. X, 1937, pp. 401–19.

[2] A plea for inter-disciplinary approach for 'the explanation and prediction of human behaviour, individual and collective' is made by John Gillin, 'A Unified Science of Human Behaviour' in *Social Forces*, Vol. XXVIII, October 1949, pp. 110–12. The same need runs through all the writings of Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, London, 1946; *Man and Society*, London, 1946; his introduction to Viola Klein, *Feminine Character*, London, 1946. Studies towards the Integration of Social Science are carried out by the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; see its journal *Human Relations*.

[3] S. F. Nadel, 'The Typological Approach to Culture' in *Character and Personality*, Vol. V, 1937, p. 268.

[4] Covert—overt culture is Linton's term, and explicit—implicit is Kluckhohn's.

[5] Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Covert Culture and Administrative Problems' in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLV, 1943, pp. 213–29, and his review of Malinowski's 'Dynamics of Culture Change' in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LI, 1946, pp. 571–3.

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the values dear to some human temperaments and alien to others, a culture embodies these values more and more firmly in its structure, in its political and religious systems, in its art and literature, and each new generation is shaped firmly and definitely to the dominant trends."[1] For Benedict, cultural configurations are mere expressions of autonomous psychological trends, leading to the integration of culture and producing the 'ideal type' and the 'deviant'. In this way, the typical personality amongst the Plains Indians is somewhat manic or Dionysian, while that of the Zuni Indians is self-effacing or Apollonian.[2] Bateson explains culture change as the appropriateness of such a given change to the properties and 'genius' of the culture concerned. The circularity between the individual and his society must mean that 'the culture in some way affects the psychology of the individuals, causing whole groups of individuals to think and feel alike. A culture perpetuates itself through education, inducing and promoting certain types of psychological processes, or by selection, favouring those individuals who have an innate tendency to psychological processes of a certain kind.'[3]

The exponents of the 'culture pattern theory' have been subjected to various criticisms. The type of integration they infer is 'impressionistic' and oversimplified. Other critics maintain that the patterns formulated are of an 'aesthetic nature' rather than scientific, and that pattern-consciousness is a product of the mind of these writers and not necessarily derived from the cultural data observed.[4] If this 'pattern-formation' is based on an analogy with the individual, psychologists, and especially clinical psychologists, categorically deny the fact that there is an individual who is 'fully integrated' or 'inherently harmonious'.[5] As one of the most trenchant critics of the cultural pattern theory, Nadel finds it something of a miscellany made up of various cultural sectors and forces, e.g. unconscious choices, tacit impulses and diffuse emotional motives, rational purposes, and moral values and judgments.[6] If some kind of integration is necessary for the survival of society, it does not necessarily have to be focused on one *idée fixe*, a single attitude or value about which the rest of cultural content is organized. 'Many cultures seem to include a considerable number of attitudes and values all of which are significant, and each of which serves as a focal point for the integration of a different sector of the total culture."[7]

[1] Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, London, 1935. Introduction.

[2] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, London, 1949.

[3] Gregory Bateson, *Naven*, Cambridge, 1936, p. 113.

[4] Petrim Sorokin, *Society, Culture and Personality*, New York, 1947, pp. 337–41, reviews the various concepts of integrations and attempts to establish the criteria of causal-functional and meaningful logico-aesthetic integration. See also S. F. Nadel, op. cit.

[5] Géza Roheim, *Psycho-Analysis and Anthropology* (*Culture, Personality and the Unconscious*), New York, 1950.

[6] *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, London, 1951, pp. 391–2.

[7] Ralph Linton in Abraham Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, New York, 1939. Foreword, p. ix.

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While the 'typologists' have carried their concept of integration to that length, the critics of their approach however have not abandoned the concept of 'the unitary character of society', not on a single value or affect, but in a threefold frame of reference, including the integration of purposes, a pattern of psychological nature and a pattern of logical consistency. With the alignment, coincidence, and interrelation of these facets of culture, its possible unity and consistency emerge as an outcome of analysis and social understanding. In this way, certain constellations of cultural behaviour could be solely and intelligibly understood in terms of either logical consistency or rational purposes, implying some measure of fitness between this type of behaviour and its psychological functions. However, certain actions cannot be explained in the light of these two categories, being irrational or non-logical, and in such cases psychological explanations are required and appropriate.[1]

With this frame of reference, it would be possible to conceive different expressions in cultural contents as well as selected biases and 'preferred persistent tendences' as put forward by Bartlett.[2] From Nadel and Linton, the writer finds his most satisfactory theoretical explanations for the selectivity of culture and for the interlocking of its contents, and he turns now to search for his leads with regard to the various methods used by a society for its cultural continuity. This leads to the vast field of culture, personality, and national character studies which has been extending so rapidly during the last ten years. The purpose of these studies is to ascertain how various cultures affect the personality of their individuals, producing different personality structures. What is meant here by the personality is neither the autonomous nor the purely biological or universal characteristics of the individual. Personality must be viewed primarily as a configuration of responses which an individual has developed as a result of his experience.[3] With Linton's masterly analysis of the relation between culture and personality, it is only important here to note that by the explanatory concept of personality we mean the 'typical individual' or, according to Bartlett, 'the Social Personality'.[4] It is impossible to give here any adequate review of such studies, but it could be stated that they bring out the impact of culture, the ways it conditions individual behaviour, motivations, perception, and attitudes, and portray the cultural forces

[1] S. F. Nadel, op. cit., Chapter xiii.

[2] F. C. Bartlett, *Remembering*, London, 1932, p. 255.

[3] R. Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, London, 1947, p. 83. G. Bateson, 'The Cultural Determinants of Personality', in McV. Hunt (ed.), *Personality and Behaviour Disorders*, Vol. XI, New York, 1944. P. Sorokin, likening the newly-born baby to a phonograph, says with reference to the biological endowments that 'a well-constructed phonograph, to be sure, plays any record better than a poorly constructed phonograph. . . . But what "socio-cultural records" he will play (whether a Beethoven symphony or jazz) are dependent relatively little on the biological factors and are acquired mainly through the process of interaction with other human beings.' Ibid., Vol. XI, p. 5.

[4] 'Personality Structure', like 'culture', is an abstraction, based on the observation of the 'norm' in variations of behaviour exhibited by individuals.

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producing a type of personality with 'predictable behaviour'.[1] Many of these studies, under the influence of the Freudian psychology, lay their emphasis on child-rearing practices, such as sphincter control, the weaning situation or manner of swaddling, as the basic determinant of adult personality or national character, or as ultimate causes of Japan's or Germany's going to war.[2] Moreover, many of these studies ignore or attribute little importance to social institutions, value systems, and forces of history, economics, and politics. One of the most sober and balanced approaches to this question is that of Kluckhohn and Leighton in their writings on the Navaho.[3]

This approach of Culture-Personality brought to the forefront the problems involved in the individual's development and his adaptation to the cultural situation in the process of growing up. Some social anthropologists, such as Firth and Richards, have described 'what' is transmitted to the growing child during his life cycle, but 'how' the transmission of the cultural heritage takes place has received less attention.[4] According to Kardiner, the 'minutiae' of the cultural procedures are as important as the end-product to the understanding of both culture and personality formation.[5] It is only recently that anthropology, enriched by personality psychology and psycho-analytical concepts, has concerned itself with the genetic development of cultural norms, attitudes, and skills in the growing individual. This type of approach, with its varying emphases, is sometimes called 'diachronic', explaining how an antecedent condition of society is converted into some subsequent condition and thus includes the study of individuals.[6] In the 'synchronic' approach, however, culture is regarded as something 'given' and as a matter of adult transmission from one group to another and from one generation to another. "The supposed "givenness" of culture is the most serious obstacle to our real understanding of culture and culture change and their relationship to individual personality. . . . From the culture-acquiring child point of view, we find that culture is .

[1] For a valuable collection of articles on this theme of 'Culture-Personality' see Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry A. Murray (ed.), *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture*, New York, 1948. For a good bibliography and survey of studies on national character see Julian H. Steward, ibid., pp. 75–83, and G. Bateson, 'Morale and National Character', in Godwin Watson, *Civilian Morale*.

[2] An extreme example of this approach is Geoffrey Gorer's *The American People*, New York, 1948, and in collaboration with J. Rickman, *The People of Great Russia*, London, 1950. For a specific type of approach to national character see Raymond B. Cattell, 'The Dimensions of Culture Patterns by Factorization of National Characteristics', in *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, October 1949.

[3] A. and D. Leighton, *The Navaho Door*, Harvard University Press, 1945. A. Leighton and C. Kluckhohn, *The Children of the People*, Harvard, 1948.

[4] See Meyer Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, London, 1938, p. 6.

[5] A. Kardiner, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society*, New York, 1945, p. 4.

[6] M. Mead, 'Character Formation and the Diachronic Theory', in M. Fortes (ed.), *Social Structure*, Oxford, 1949, p. 18.

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something to be gradually and gropingly explored and discovered"[1] 131

This approach has resulted in a number of studies on the 'socialization' and the 'growing up' of the individual in his or her cultural context, showing how the child in its development gradually approximates to the general orientations of the social personality of the mature adult. In this manner, these studies directly touch the educational issues involved in social and cultural adaptation. They bring to the forefront the ways in which the individual becomes a culture-carrier and a culture-modifier. The details of the learning process, 'the cultural shaping of appetites', the social disciplines, and the system of reward and punishment, all find their place in the study of socialization, through which cultural transmission is made possible by replacing 'outer force' by 'inner compulsion'. In this manner the link between 'culture' and 'education' becomes obvious, and the approaches of cultural anthropology and sociology can be greatly relevant to educational questions.

This process of replacing the social force by individual acceptance of a basic minimum of conformity has led to the adoption of certain theoretical concepts and findings of psychology by some social anthropologists. In this particular field of child development, the work of psycho-analysts and clinical psychologists has been the most relevant to anthropologists. Some of their findings, believed to be universal with regard to characteristics of adolescence or the absolute connection between toilet training, early infantile experience, and character traits, have been checked and modified by anthropologists working in cultures different from the European background.[2]

However, the orthodox psycho-analytical emphasis on childhood experiences to the minimization of later possibilities of re-education has been criticized by many psychologists and psycho-analysts of the so-called 'Neo-Freudian' school, with its sociological orientation.[3] Whatever the criticism of clinical psychology may be, the writer accepts their assumption that childhood training and disciplines form one of the resources of society for channelling human energy into the preferred cultural responses. The position of psycho-analysts sophisticated with the findings of social anthropology is made clear in Erikson's recent work on *Childhood and Society* from which the following statement has been taken in connection with education amongst the Sioux Indians:

'A first impression suggests that the cultural demand for generosity received its early foundation from the privilege of enjoying the nourishment and reassurance emanating from the unlimited breast-feeding; while the necessity of suppressing the biting rage contributed to the tribe's always ready ferocity.

[1] E. Sapir, 'The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures' in *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. V, 1943, pp. 408–15.

[2] M. Mead, 'The Primitive Child', in Murchison, *Handbook of Child Psychology*, New York, 1946.

[3] Famous amongst these 'Neo-Freudians' are Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, and Abram Kardiner.

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121 'We are not saying here that their treatment in babyhood causes a group of adults to have certain traits—as if you turned a few knobs in your child-training system and you fabricated this or that kind of tribal or national character. In fact we are not discussing traits in the sense of irreversible aspects of character. We are speaking of goals and values and of the energy put at their disposal by child-training systems. Such values persist because public opinion continues to consider them "natural" and does not admit of alternatives. . . . But values do not persist unless they work, economically, psychologically and spiritually, and I argue that to this end they must continue to be anchored, generation after generation, in early child-training; to remain consistent, must be embedded in a system of continued economic and cultural syntheses. For it is the synthesis operating within a culture which increasingly tends to bring into close-knit thematic relationship and mutual amplification such matters as climate and anatomy, economy and psychology, society and child-training.'[1]

Kardiner, in collaboration with Linton, is perhaps one of the most important clinical psychologists who have applied psycho-analysis to the study of culture. He developed the concept of basic personality structure, an abstraction which can be deduced from the content and organization of a culture, with a kind of dialectic between it and the cultural institutions. Kardiner maintains that, in this way, his scheme is interactional and dynamic, as 'changes in certain institutions result in changes in basic personality structure, while such basic personality changes, in turn, lead to the modification and reinterpretation of existing institutions'.[2] Kardiner and Linton themselves are aware of the difficulties in their concept of the basic personality structure and especially that of equating it with the personality of the individuals of that society. Its advantage, however, over the framework of the culture pattern exponents, is that it groups together certain interrelated items of behaviour and treats them as units. A number of institutions and constellations of institutional behaviour may be orientated towards food, another towards sex, and a third towards attitudes arising out of childhood training. This concept of the 'basic personality structure' takes into account the varied range of cultural institutions with such values as rank, prestige, and status. Such an approach renders it possible to make certain predictions about the institutions which such a personality structure is likely to invent, accept, or reject.[3] Unlike the orthodox psycho-analysts, Kardiner includes in his scheme the boon of culture as well as its discontents, as evidenced in his emphasis on the term 'ego structure' rather than 'the libidinal ties'.[4] He places adequate emphasis on the social

[1] Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, London, 1950, pp. 101–2.
[2] R. Linton in Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society*, p. vii.
[3] A. Kardiner, *Psychological Frontiers of Society*, p. 99.
[4] In this way he accepts the functionalist approach, in which culture is viewed as increasing the individual power of achievement, an 'initial instalment' of freedom as well

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forces, although here the interaction of the basic personality structure on the cultural institutions has not been worked out satisfactorily. His methodology of culture analysis on the criteria of security systems, sexual controls, points of tension, satisfaction of dependency cravings, social disciplines, fantasy gratification provides possible and feasible 'pegs' for constellations of human behaviour. It also provides a scope for a better understanding of certain universal features of culture, such as dreams and folklore, in a functional way, by establishing their linkage with other cultural constellations.[1] Thus, in this work, many of Kardiner's constructs have been utilized for the explanation of certain aspects of our data, especially in connection with folk and children's tales, dreams, food anxieties, and sexual behaviour.

The field methods used in this study are those of the current anthropological repertory depending mainly on hearing and seeing through participant observation, informants, and asking questions of many adults and children on certain problems and to check data given by informants.[2] For information about children, the Kuttabs and the elementary school were available centres together with a 'children's home' organized in the writer's house to which children between seven and twelve years old came on three occasions. It was impossible to stimulate adolescent interest in such a gathering, partly because of their economic responsibilities, and partly because of their excessive shyness and reserve, and this perhaps accounts for the thinness of our observations concerning this age group. Intelligence tests, Stewart Emotional Response, Moral Ideology, Story Completion and Rorschach tests, were administered to children, with the exception of the last test which included adults as well.

A preliminary statement about the choice of certain psychological tests is necessary here to indicate the extent of their relevance to our study. The Moral Ideology, the Emotional Response, and the Story Completion tests are intended to reveal some of the norms and the attitudes which children acquire at various stages of development and some of their

as restricting individual impulses for the purposes of social control. See Sigmund Freud, *Freedom and Civilization*, London, 1947, p. 31. Freud has emphasized the inhibitory and restrictive forces of culture (Super-Ego). See his book *Civilization and its Discontents*.

[1] For criticisms of the Kardiner-Linton approach see S. F. Nadel, *Foundations of Social Anthropology*, pp. 403–8; Henry Orenne, 'Synthesis in Social Sciences', in *Sociometry*, Vol. VIII, 1945, pp. 008–15, where he maintains that Kardiner's interpretations of the primitive cultures studied, though feasible and meaningful, are only possible explanations and are not necessarily ones arising from the material concerned. As a psychologist he, like some anthropologists, objects to the superimposition of psychological categories, conceptualized in terms of the individual, on sociology, which conceptualizes in terms of the group. See also L. M. Hanks in his review of Kardiner, 'The Individual and His Society', *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. XII, 1940, p. 475, where he emphasizes the importance of behaviour and attitudes falling outside the range defined by institutional behaviour.

[2] For an assessment of my informants, see Appendix I. See also Audrey T. Richards, 'The Development of Field Work Methods in Social Anthropology', in *The Study of Society*, ed. by F. C. Bartlett, London, 1939.

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and service programmes as an excellent way of integrating the fields of both applied and theoretical Anthropology.[1] This constraint and fear of divulging personal information could be also attributed to the vulnerability of the villagers' ego-structure, to which we shall refer later.[2]

What relevance have such assumptions and approach to a study in education? A great part of the answer to such a question must be obvious by now. If education, in its broadest sense, is the process of transmitting the cultural contents, values, attitudes, and the body of technical and social experience from one generation to another, surely the sociological approach is of the greatest value in educational research and educational policies. As Sir Fred Clarke expressed it, culture is the whole life-medium, and not the background with which education is concerned.[3] Formal educational institutions, from schools to universities, are only one transmissive agent of any nation's 'way of life'. Our approach does not preclude the assumption that they are amongst the most efficient means of such transmission or that they are also a potent force in effecting social change. Here we are mainly concerned with education as the means of cultural continuity, of building social solidarity and cohesion. It is probably because of uncritical faith in schools and other formal educational institutions that this transmissive role of education has been ignored. This is vaguely felt when some educationists go to the extreme and advocate leaving children absolutely free for the development of their peculiarities of interest and behaviour. Such are rightly designated as cranks. Apart from those who entertain the ideas of Rousseau's Emile, 'we are well aware that children learn their patterns of social behaviour, their ideas on family life and earning a living, their value systems in relation to social and economic life, far more extensively and intensively outside school than inside'.[4] Society thus keeps itself as a going concern by educating its individuals to its established and time-tested ways of believing, feeling, thinking, and reacting for purposes of social action.[5]

Looking at education from this viewpoint may perhaps be disheartening to those educational planners and administrators who are anxious to go

[1] Oscar Lewis, *Life in a Mexican Village*, Introduction, p. xv.

[2] Differences between cultures are also reflected in the varying ease with which field workers could procure life-histories. This point was brought to my attention by Cora du Bois who mentioned to me the striking difference in this connection between the flow of the Navaho and the constraint of the Alorese. Of course, my informants, being related to me, would not have accepted money, but perhaps other services. In such a community, people would not accept financial recompense for information given to one from the village itself. In case of an outsider, such payment might be a good incentive in a community which jealously guards against the divulging of personal and family privacies. For motivation of informants see S. F. Nadel, 'The Interview in Social Anthropology', in *The Study of Society*, ed. by F. C. Bartlett.

[3] Sir Fred Clarke, *Freedom in the Educative Society*, London, 1948.

[4] Paper read by M. Read before the Education Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Edinburgh, August, 1951.

[5] Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man*, New York, 1949, p. 188.

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12 ahead with the job, but, as Karl Mannheim repeatedly emphasized, 'no educational activity or research is adequate in the present stage of consciousness unless it is conceived in terms of sociology of education'. 'Society blindness' or lack of 'social awareness' may lead to totalitarianism, or at least to educational malaise and wishful thinking.[1]

This sociological approach to education has stimulated few studies for the evaluation of educational systems and policies as a function of a certain social order. In his *Education and Social Change* Sir Fred Clarke has shown that, in England, although many formulations about educational policy are consistently adopted in practice, they are yet less explicitly recognized in theory. Such policies and practices taken for granted are nonetheless potent in shaping the trends of English education, and his book consists of an analysis of the social and historical determinants of the educational system. He also made a plea for examining the various types of educational institutions and for analysing the extent to which they have reflected certain characteristics of English life.[2]

For the United States, the book entitled *Who Shall be Educated?* is an example of a sociological approach to the function of the public school system in the American society. It shows how only partly true is the Americans' faith that their education system provides everybody with an equal chance to the realization of the 'American dream'. The authors, on the basis of their sociological findings, maintain that the American educational institutions cannot be satisfactorily explained by such labels as the democratic spirit, the American Constitution, or equality of educational opportunities, but must be examined in the light of the status system which operates in the lives of American children. The freedom of educators and administrators who conceive of the educational system as serving democratic purposes is hedged about by certain irreducible stubborn facts about human beings, social institutions and the spheres of valuations within them.[3] After describing some case studies of children, the authors observe that 'even at the early age of ten or twelve, these children all were travelling different paths of life. The school, with its common life, brought most of them together and gave them a common experience and a common literacy. But, as Miss Crane (their teacher) knew, the prescribed social lines of the community fell upon them and even influenced their learning in school. What a given child learned was not in Miss Crane's power to determine. She could try to teach them all the same things, but they would not learn the same things.'[4]

In the light of such facts, the authors conclude that it is desirable to gear the selecting machinery of educational institutions to the demands and capacity of the social structure. If too few people are selected and

[1] K. Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our Time*, London, 1943.
[2] Sir Fred Clarke, *Education and Social Change—An English Interpretation*, London, 1940.
[3] By W. Lloyd Warner, Robert Havighurst and Martin B. Loeb, London, 1946.
[4] W. Lloyd Warner *et al.*, op cit., p. 15.

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promoted through the educational system, the upper levels will be filled through other agencies and perhaps filled with people not properly trained. If too many are selected and pushed up, competition will become fierce for the higher jobs; some people will have to accept jobs below the level for which they are trained, and will consequently become frustrated and cynical. The authors assert: 'We need to see more clearly that various sub-groups in our society can aim at different goals and that it is not necessary for everyone to shoot for the top.' A certain amount of social mobility seems necessary to maintain cohesion; a large measure of it would spell social instability and too little would give rise to dissatisfaction.[1]

A more functional approach has been adopted in a project carried out by the American Youth Council in connection with the Negroes in the United States. The project has centred around the question 'How does the fact of being born a Negro affect the developing personality of a boy or a girl?' In this manner the writers attempted to show the relation between the home environment and the school. We cannot review the findings of these studies here.[2] It is only relevant to refer to them as another example of the increasing awareness to the importance of sociological research for programmes of educational reconstruction.

With these assumptions of theory and methods of research, this study has been written with the transmissive function of education as the centre around which the village institutions, value-systems, attitudes and aims and methods of 'growing up' are arranged. Education here is considered in its two aspects. The first, the technical, consists in acquiring the skills and techniques which enable the individual to become socially useful and a productive member, contributing to the group wealth and strength. The second aspect, which Kluckhohn calls the regulatory training, is the society's means of reducing as much as possible the individual's 'nuisance value' within the group and of promoting to the maximum social cohesion.[3]

Moreover, studies of this kind would help in evaluating or at least viewing in perspective the national policy in education. What is the function of the modern system of schools and universities in Egyptian society? To what extent are these institutions functionally related to the needs of

[1] It must be noted here that the frame of reference of this book is status and rank and their effect on equality of educational opportunity in the American class-structured society. The same approach has been adopted by Warner and others in their studies in the Yankee City series.

[2] This series contains five volumes:
Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* (American Council of Education), Washington, 1940.
Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways*, 1940.
Charles Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, 1941.
Lloyd Warner, Buford Junker and Walter Adams, *Colour and Human Nature*, 1941.
Robert Sutherland, *Colour, Class and Personality*, 1942.

[3] The distinction between these two aspects of education is made by Clyde Kluckhohn, *Mirror for Man*, p. 190. A similar distinction is also made by M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*.

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[21] cultural continuity and social change? How can modern schooling be organized to promote economic productivity? Does the national system of education operate within the traditional value system and social sanctions, and if not what does it offer instead? Of course, these issues cannot be answered in this book, for we are mainly concerned with the educative process of the traditional pattern in a community which is hardly influenced by modern schooling.

[23] In summary we may say that this is an attempt to study childhood in an Egyptian village community. Children are not only observed in school or classroom, but also in their everyday life within the social group in which they live, work, play, and move. As far as is known to the writer there have been no studies of this kind, except a few autobiographies written by some eminent writers.[1] Such autobiographies, however, must be regarded, if to be made use of in sociological studies, in the light of two main reservations. The first is the therapeutic manipulation of the writer's memory for certain experiences, and the second is the requirements of literary style.[2]

[1] See, for example, Taha Hussain, *al Ayyam* (in Arabic), translated into English by E. H. Paxton, *An Egyptian Childhood*, London, 1932. Ahmad Ameen, *Hayati* (*My Life*), Cairo, 1950 (in Arabic). Edward Atiyah, *An Arab Tells His Story*, London, 1946.

[2] See Margaret Mead, 'Research on Primitive Children', in L. Carmichael, *Manual of Child Psychology*, New York, 1946, pp. 694-5.

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Chapter One

LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

The natural resources, methods of production, means of livelihood and property system of any community provide a tangible mechanism which regulates and gives stability to the relations between its members in accordance with the value system governing that culture.[1] In Silwa, the village community under study, agriculture is the basic activity of the great majority of the population.

According to the 1947 Census the distribution of occupations in Silwa is as follows:[2]

Occupation	*Male*	*Female*
Farmers	1088	1451
Industrial workers	47	84
Masons	42	0
Transport	36	0
Trade	60	1
Personal servants	10	387
Servants in Govt. offices and other social services	78	.
Unproductive and undefined jobs	272	86
Unemployed	292	317
TOTAL: 4457	2130	2327

Taking this table as a criterion for village occupations, it is clear that more than 60 per cent of the total population are engaged in agriculture. Yet the official census does not define its categories of occupation, and is

[1] Ernest Beaglehole, *Property, A Study in Social Psychology*, London, 1931.

[2] *Population Census, 1947* (Book I, Province of Aswan), Government Press, Cairo, 1951, p. 85.

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mitting adultery is motivated by emulation', 'Make your harvest look big, otherwise your enemies will rejoice'.[1]

The pride in the family unity and name is associated with its labour on the land. One can see the effect of the driving motive of emulation in the appearance of the outer sections nearer to the road or to the canal. Special attention is always given to these sections, as they are usually the most elevated and best cultivated sections of the land. The main ideal for which every family strives is to be 'mastourah', which literally means to be covered, or, in other words, to be balanced and publicly approved and not exposed to outside shaming. The special attention given to the outer sections of the field would at least rid the farmer of shame, if the rest of his field were not properly cultivated. Esteem and honour are accorded by the villagers to those who have made a success of their farming, and this is usually mixed up with a feeling of envy. To be an industrious farmer attending to his business is a good qualification for a youth about to get married, while slothfulness militates against his chances. Parents stimulate their sons of marriageable age to work hard as an incentive for their marriage as early as possible.

In a discussion of livelihood in the village, an evaluation of the standard of living is a necessary step for the full appreciation of the villagers' life. It has been made clear by anthropologists that the standard of living is not only a matter of production and consumption, but equally depends on the cultural values that govern these processes. 'In no society do we find people consuming whatever comes to hand or producing the minimum necessary for existence with the least possible effort. Man is a rational being, and hence there are reasons to be discovered for his choice of food and clothing and for the efforts which he makes to produce the objects of his choice.'[2] These cultural premises are implicit in every society, determining, to a great extent, the ways in which individuals handle their 'material culture'.[3]

In the previous pages reference has been made to some of the social incentives for work, but accumulation of wealth has not been included. For contentment with what one possesses, as predestined by God, is the keynote of the villagers' happiness. In some dwellings and guest houses this ideal is written on the wall, 'Contentment is an inexhaustible treasure'. One should not amass wealth, but should spend it in pious acts, otherwise, according to the Koran, as Ali recited, 'With the gold and silver a man accumulates he would be seared on the forehead, on the side, and on the

[1] A popular story is told about a jealous farmer whose neighbour enquired from him about the amount of fertilizer he distributed in every section (bod). He told him that he usually put two basketfuls; and thus the neighbour followed his advice. But later on the latter found that his cultivation was not as good as that of the farmer, and discovered that it was due to the fact that his neighbour used to distribute three baskets, and not two as he had told him.

[2] Margaret Read, *Native Standards of Living and the African Culture Change*, p. 11.

[3] For a quantitative assessment of the standard of living in Silwa, see Appendix III.

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Chapter Two

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

SOCIAL GROUPINGS

By 'social organization' here is meant the relations between social groups which have a certain ordered arrangement in the community. This is usually called by most anthropologists 'social structure'. We shall deal not only with the expected or ideal pattern of relations between the groups or the individuals, but also with their realization in concrete social behaviour. As Malinowski has emphasized, one must not only consider the 'charter' of the institutions and their traditional norms governing human conduct; it is equally important to study the real activities which may differ from the prescribed expectations owing to specific social pressure.[1] Moreover, 'social organization' will also include the 'social controls' that maintain 'law and order in the community' as well as the religious and magical sanctions which serve to validate social action.

In Silwa, the family is the basic social unit around which the individual's life is centred. According to the official statistics, there are 1,223 families in Silwa Bahari, with an average of four persons to each family. In Arabic, the word family (aila) literally means the social unit that supports its members. In Silwa, the words for family and household (bait) are sometimes interchangeably used. Ideally, the minimum personnel of the family comprises parents, unmarried children and married sons with their wives. There are, however, many other variations on this pattern, e.g. a conjugal family with a son-in-law, with the husband's sister who is a widow, with the husband's paternal nephew or niece who is an orphan, or with a paternal cousin. One can safely say that the composition of the members of a household constituting a family is mainly determined by the patrilineal principle, an emphasis which lies at the root of the family in Silwa. The position of such a family depends on property and ownership of land, as it is the main factor that makes the family live in one household. A widowed sister lives with her married brother if she transfers to him her property of land or at least allows him to till it. As married boys can have no property

[1] B. Malinowski, *A Scientific Theory of Culture*, pp. 32-3.

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Chapter Three

FOLK LIFE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE VILLAGE

A STUDY of the village community cannot ignore an analysis of the process of social change and its by-products. Unlike a primitive tribe, the village community is an integral part of a larger whole—the nation. One of the contributions of modern sociology is the distinction between community and state or society as constituting 'distinct categories of integrative forces'. The integrative forces of the community are based on more spontaneous, natural, and direct relations binding people who are of the same kin; whereas society is more artificial, more indirect, and more deliberate in its relations, maintaining its unity and cohesion with more conscious effort. The social heritage of the community is mainly local, tied up with its habitat; thus, usually, community and locality are almost synonymous.[1]

Such distinction has also been made between genuine and spurious culture, or between folk culture and modern civilization. In the analysis of Silwa community and social change, the concept of folk society is to be adopted as a useful one. Robert Redfield has successfully introduced this term to suggest the inclusion of 'peasant and rustic peoples who are not wholly independent of cities'.[2] Hence, it is necessary to project folk life in Silwa, and the processes of social change, against the larger framework of culture change in the Egyptian society.

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the state has envisaged the modernization of Egypt mainly in terms of Western civilization, the impact of which has been steadily increasing since the French expedition of 1798. It was through the efforts of the French scholars and Napoleon's reforms that Egypt started to interest itself in Western civilization. The Western way of life was greatly admired by Mohammad Ali, who ascended to power in 1805, and whose ambitious plans to build up a modern state led him to imitate Europe as widely as possible.

[1] This distinction is based on S. F. Nadel's article on 'Nupe State and Community', in *Africa*, Vol. VIII, 1935.

[2] Robert Redfield, 'The Folk Society', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LII, 1947, footnote, p. 293.

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military defeat meant the ousting of one ruling power by another.[1] Although it is these rulers who have engaged the main interest of historians, it is the habits and traditions of the common folk that have, in fact, been the ultimate forces determining the general run of Egyptian life. What Gruening wrote of Mexico, quoted by Redfield, is equally applicable to the situation in Egypt. 'In few countries is political history less significant than in Mexico, yet its historiographies are pre-eminently political.' Redfield continues: 'The formal institutions, the explicit statement of programme or policy, the bulk of contemporary documents, lie remote from the ways of the masses and record their history almost not at all. The world of the cultivated classes who alone are articulate and alone communicate freely with us, is a world apart from that of the folk.'[2]

Only to a very small extent has Silwa been affected by the forces mentioned earlier. It still preserves its folk culture as the basis of its community life. The village is a homogeneous community in the threefold implication of the term. It is homogeneous to the extent that the villagers belong, or at least consider themselves to belong, to one blood group, engaging in the same kind of work, and, moreover, characterized by slow rate of social change.[3]

The question of social change exists, however, in terms of 'setting and background', and not by itself. 'This is why a discussion of change in culture has meaning only as part of the problem of cultural stability. Both terms are relative and dependent on one another.'[4]

In the process of social change examined in Yucatan, Redfield maintains that the life of primitive peoples can be contrasted with the way of life characterizing civilization in modern urban centres. He maintains that the change is one from a relatively immobile, homogeneous society in which relationships are personal, controls familial, sanctions sacred, with a well-integrated culture, to one tending to have opposite characteristics. In short, organization, individualization, and secularization are causally interrelated with isolation, integration, and homogeneity. In Yucatan, the

[1] Gibb and Bowen say that during the Ottoman rule of the Arab Provinces, and even before that, governors and governed had little effect on each other. 'The explanation is to be found in the very lack of a complex, all-embracing political organization. . . . We may visualise Moslem society as composed of two co-existing groups, the relations between which were for the most part formal and superficial. One group formed the governing class of soldiers and officials, the other the governed class of merchants, artisans and cultivators. Each was organized internally on independent lines and neither group interfered with the organization of the other in normal circumstances.' *Islamic Society and the West*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 209.

[2] Quoted by R. Redfield, *Tepoztlan, A Mexican Village*, p. 1: 'In Egypt at present, the new social order is deliberately attempting to bridge the gap between these two social strata. Many of the new legislations aim at minimizing disparities between citizens and at providing equal opportunities for all.'

[3] See Margaret Mead, 'Character Formation and Diachronic Theory', in *Social Structure*, p. 81.

[4] Melville J. Herskovits, 'The Processes of Cultural Change', in *Science of Man*, p. 144.

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community marked with the lowest degree of isolation and homogeneity was characterized by the highest degree of individualization, secularization, and disorganization, and conversely.[1]

This hypothesis of the historical phases of culture change has stimulated other anthropologists to test it. Sol Tax, examining the hypothesis in the light of his Guatemalan data, was led to make a distinction between two aspects of culture that would cut across Redfield's framework. With regard to the world view and the beliefs about nature and man, the Guatemalan Indians are of the primitive type, while in their kind of social relations they are of the civilized type. He maintains that the interrelationships of the folk-life characteristics as found in Yucatan do not necessarily repeat themselves in every folk society. The Guatemalan Indians, unsophisticated, homogeneous in beliefs and practices, are mobile, having relationships of the impersonal type, with formal institutions dictating the acts of individuals, with familial organization weak, and with life secularized.[2]

It was also pointed out that Max Weber has shown how capitalistic commercialism could, and did, go hand in hand with piety in the case of the Protestants and the Puritans. Under certain conditions of literate, and at least partly urbanized, society, a culture may be both highly commercial and sacred as in the case of the Jewish history.[3]

In the light of these findings, Silwa community fits rather with Redfield's characteristics of the folk society. Silwa is a comparatively isolated community, as it lies at a distance of about thirty miles from both Edfu and Kom Ombo, the nearest urban centres to the north and south respectively, while more than seven hundred miles separates it from Cairo. On the other hand, it is less isolated than other village communities in the sense that there is a Post Office, a Railway Station (at which express trains do not stop), as well as a Police Station. It is also less isolated in that it has a weekly market, to which people from surrounding villages and traders from nearby towns come to buy and sell their goods.

The villagers are, on the whole, relatively immobile, a phenomenon that makes face to face relationships loom large in the folk society. The attachment to their locality is also associated with a sectional pride in their origin, which embraces the various villages of G'afra, and explains to them the differences between their customs and traditions and those of other regions. The villagers refer to themselves as well as to other Moslems by the term 'nation of Moslems' (ummat-al-muslimeen), and feel that they are Arabs first and foremost. One occasionally sees pictures of Imam Ali and his sons, Hassan and Hussein, Abu-zeid-al-Hilali, decorating some houses, especially of newly married couples. For the villagers, the world is

[1] Robert Redfield, *The Folk Culture of Yucatan*, pp. 360, 362.
[2] Sol Tax, 'World View and Social Relations in Guatemala', in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. XLIII, 1941, pp. 27–42.
[3] Robert Redfield, 'The Folk Society', in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. LII, 1947, p. 308.

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Chapter Five

THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS AND EVENTS OF CHILDHOOD

In this chapter the main characteristics and events of childhood affecting both the social and psychological aspects of the individual's personality in Silwa are to be discussed. Infancy, with which we dealt in the last chapter, is regarded as the three or four years of the person's life at the end of which, whatever the family and individual variations may be, the infant is weaned, begins to talk and responds to adult commands. The following years are those of childhood until the age of twelve or thirteen, when the boy or the girl, at puberty, enters the adolescent stage.

In our consideration of the process of 'growing up' of children, there is hardly need to stress the fact that the process is not identical for all children. It is beyond any question that there are certain forces and conditions that bring about 'the distinctive personality constellations', e.g. the death of a sibling older or younger, loss of a mother, a father, state of child's health, child's birth order, age of parents at the time of child's birth.[1] These distinctive factors with their concomitant individual differences are recognized by the villagers. A child may be referred to as a 'child of old parents' (waldat 'ajayiz) and is usually characterized by being precocious in his development, or a 'child brought forth in the years of plenty or in the lean years', the former possessing easy and happy disposition, while the latter is expected to be nagging and irritable. In the next two chapters, however, the common prevailing forces that leave their impact on the personality development of the village children are discussed.

One of the main characteristics of this period of childhood is the pressure of sibling rivalry which is socially recognized, being evidenced in certain symbolic forms of wear, folk-lore, and symptoms of sickness. Sibling rivalry, however, is not peculiar to the child's growing up in Silwa, but, as demonstrated by Levy's projective doll-playing tests, 'represents a

[1] Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Personality Formation among the Navaho Indians', in *Sociometry*, Vol. IX, 1946, pp. 130–1.

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Chapter Six

THE AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIALIZATION IN SILWA

In this chapter it is intended to outline the procedures and methods that are adopted in this community to inculcate the norms that transform the child, who is relatively peripheral, into the adult who is the central link in village social life. The transition can be considered, as Fortes puts it, as one 'from an economically passive burden into a producer, from a biological unit into a social personality, irretrievably cast in the habits, disposition, and notions characteristic of his culture'.[1] Fortes has also provided the writer with certain insight in evaluating the learning process as a by-product of the cultural routine, a phenomenon which obtains in the village community. It is obvious that in Silwa the education of children is not surrounded, as in some primitive societies, with ceremonies of initiation, elaborate ritual, or narration of totemic myths. Learning accrues mainly through children's observing, imitating and assisting their adults in their everyday activities. For the villagers express the educational process through emphasizing life and time as the most important educational agencies which mould and influence the character, and provide the experience. The difference between an adult and a child is, on the whole, quantitative rather than qualitative. The former knows and thus conforms to the cultural norms, while the latter does not. The commonly used word is not the classical word 'tifl' (infant) but another word which is also classical but literally means 'ignorant' (jahil)—and thus identifies ignorance with childhood. It is because of this ignorance of expected skills, norms and attitudes that the children are considered inferior to the adult, and the younger as subservient to the elder.

Here socialization is to include its two aspects of technical training and cultural or regulatory training.[2] In Chapter I it was shown how a boy or a girl is progressively introduced to the economic pursuits of adults, and what skills were expected of them at successive stages of their growth. It was also emphasized how the child was expected to take over from his

[1] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 6.
[2] See Introduction.

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father or his elder brother (or mother or elder sister) those tasks which he or she is capable of doing. The child must work for his family as a necessary requisite to enjoying their protection. This is made explicit to children by parents who, on seeing their negligent children enjoying their food, would rebuke them by saying, 'Yes, you only know how to eat and drink', or 'You know how to increase the size of your buttocks'. There is nothing to add here concerning technical training, and further reference will be made in connection with its relation to cultural training. The lack of mastery in skills required from boys at a particular age is attributed to inefficient training by the parents. Once in the fields I heard a father blaming his son for his inability to get the right fodder for the cow by saying, 'The fault is not yours; it is the fault of him who has brought you up'.

The process of growing up is envisaged as a way of disciplining the child to conform to the adults' standards, and to comply with what their elders expect them to do, thus acquiring the qualities of being polite—'muaddab'. In adult eyes, the period of childhood is a nuisance, and childhood activities, especially play, are a waste of time. The 'giving of adab' to children is the guarantee of the survival of the social structure, with its patrilineal bias and respect relationships, especially filial piety, which is sanctioned by the Koranic injunctions. To become 'muaddab' is the ideal set up by parents for their children, and the adherence to which is constantly impressed upon them. The ideal, although emphasizing subservience and obedience of the children to their parents, is actually extended to include the whole range of children's activities for which their elders are responsible. The adult sense of keenness to bring their children to realize this ideal can be traced in parents' prayers that God might not make their children disobedient or cause them shame. One of the most effective insults to a boy or a girl is the provoking remark that he or she has no people to discipline him or her. 'She is a divorced girl' or 'unrestrained'; or for a boy, 'he is a pushing boy' (literally 'ascending'). Such comments are addressed to young persons who show no respect to people of their parents' age or who transgress the limits of behaviour expected from their age or sex group, e.g. a boy walking through a gathering of men, a married man insulting his father, a girl shouting from the roof of the house while fetching fuel, or a girl caught entering the guest house.[1]

The acquiring of the procedures of 'adab', which incorporate the prescribed standards of behaviour, has also a religious sanction behind it from the prophetic tradition. It is related that the Prophet said, 'God has disciplined me, and has perfected my discipline'. The word 'muaddab' is applied to a child who defaecates outside the house at the age of three or four, and goes further and further away from the house as he grows older. After the age of ten, for instance, he is not considered 'muaddab' unless he covers his genitals while urinating. A boy of fourteen to sixteen would be 'muaddab' if he played in the evenings only, and still better, if

[1] Use of the guest house is restricted to males.

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Chapter Ten

INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

It has been pointed out by some anthropologists that in homogeneous primitive societies, the attention is focused more on the desirability of learning over against the desirability of teaching.[1] As the cultural alternatives are so limited in such communities, the individual finds himself learning the accepted skills, habits and attitudes which everyone else agrees that he would wish to learn. The desirability of learning the socially acceptable modes of living is contrasted, on the whole, with modern societies where individuals are taught various things on which there is no consensus of agreement that everyone has a desire to know. This distinction between folk and modern societies reflected in the different methods of learning and teaching is, of course, not an absolute distinction. For instance, in folk communities teaching does take place, e.g. in certain ceremonies, in the constant corrections and admonitions to children, and so on; and learning does take place in modern societies in the family and group situations.

In folk communities in general, the educative process, whether through learning or teaching, is coterminous with life, and none of its situations is deliberately singled out or isolated for drill or special training.[2] In Silwa the popular saying tends to confirm that the desire to learn is preferable to the need of being taught: 'If the boy does not learn, time will teach him the hard way.' This is also in line with the traditions of Moslem society, where people have been expected to seek knowledge as 'knowledge does not seek people'. Whether in search of special skills or religious enlightenment, the master did not go seeking pupils, but rather the converse. In the Arabic language the word for pupil or student (talib) literally means 'the searcher', he who requests and requires knowledge.

It should also be pointed out here that folk life in Silwa has been relatively independent of the influence of the written word, and it has been affected by it only through a small number of people who were considered

[1] Margaret Mead, 'Our Educational Emphases in Primitive Perspective', in *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLVIII, 1943, p. 634.
[2] M. Fortes, *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland*, p. 27.

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Chapter Twelve

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

THE preceding chapters represent a study of indigenous education in the village community of Silwa against a full portrait of the community life and organization. While it would be impossible here to gather up all the threads from which the whole survey has been woven, some general observations and conclusions can be made as an expansion of some of the issues already raised.

It must be emphasized here again that the education procedures, content and methods discussed in this work obtain in a relatively homogeneous, isolated community of small landholders. The characteristics and the end-product of these educative measures and child-training practices cannot be generalized without wider research in other areas and provinces having different cultural and economic backgrounds. A particularly relevant type of research would be, for example, in peasant communities of large farms, or in villages where there exists a number of families descended from old aristocratic families. Since large and small farmers may differ in a number of ways that are causally interrelated and self-consistent, one would expect that such differences would have their reflections in some aspects of children's education.[1]

Another general observation emerging from our functional approach is connected with the oft-heard criticisms of the irrationality of certain social institutions and customs in rural Egypt. Many social thinkers and reformers in Egypt have condemned the elaborate and expensive celebrations of circumcision, weddings, and funerals as pitfalls through which the conservative peasant falls into debt. The extended family has also been described as an institution that causes some of its members to shirk responsibility and become indolent.[2] It is apparent that these critics

[1] For sociological formulations concerning the interrelationships of the family, farm economics and kinship amongst a small farm population, see Conrad M. Arensberg and Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland*, Cambridge University Press, 1940. See also Julian H. Stewart, *Area Research*, pp. 123–4.

[2] A. Ammar, *The People of Sharqiya*. Also L. K. Tao, 'Some Chinese Characteristics in the Light of Chinese Family', in *Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, ed. by E. E. Evans-Pritchard *et al.*, London, 1934.

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psychological factor. Professor Read has commented on scientists trained in the fields of agriculture, medicine, or economics, and brought up with great faith in anything labelled scientific, who do not easily realize that the peasant has a sense of security in his very insecurity. She further maintains 'that insecurity is the thing he knows, and he understands it in so far as he has always lived with it and adjusted his practices and his ideas in relation to it'.[1]

These remarks about some of the traditional ways of life in the village are only explanations of certain social facts and imply no value judgment. As Nadel maintains, the social enquirer at some stage in his analysis inevitably turns into a social philosopher and 'must posit absolute aims or purposes, and some self-reliant worthwhileness of actions, since without these assumptions his subject matter simply makes no sense'.[2] We believe that change there can be, and ought to be. But as we have been mainly concerned in this thesis with the analytical and explanatory and not the evaluative categories of enquiry, there is no point in dwelling on the latter here.

This study provokes also a comment concerning the generalization made about the nature of the face-to-face relations in a simple society and the value concepts attached to them. Some sociologists have maintained that, because of the integration of such societies, personal relations are smooth and intimate, and perhaps attractive, contrasted with the discontents of civilization and its disorganizing forces.[3] This seems to be another type of generalization similar to that refuted by anthropologists with regard to the groupistic and individualistic nature of behaviour amongst primitive and peasant societies.

In spite of his emphasis on the group behaviour of the Arab fellaheen, and on the importance of appealing to the whole community, Tannous also mentions incidents of rivalry, conflict, and competition among them.[4] In this study we have noted how the constituent social units of this community give rise to tendencies of conflict and rivalry. It has been shown how the susceptibility to friction in this community's culture finds in the early stimulation of sibling rivalry one of its supporting forces. Both solidarity and friction are cultural expectations among siblings, and this reflects itself in the village structure as well as in its structural relations with the rest of the G'afra villages. It seems that the equilibrium of the community is maintained through an elaborate system of social behaviour

[1] Margaret Read, 'Common Grounds in Community Development Experiments', in *Community Development Bulletin*, Vol. II, June 1951.

[2] S. F. Nadel, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[3] See Kimball Young, *Social Psychology*, in his distinction between the characteristics of primary and secondary groups. This is also evident in some of Redfield's writings. See also Lewis Mumford, *Techniques and Civilization*, London, 1934.

[4] Afif I. Tannous, 'Extension Work among the Arab Fellahin', in *Farmers of the World*, ed. by Edmund de S. Brunner, Irwin T. Sanders and Douglas Ensminger, New York, 1947 ed., pp. 78–100.

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unlimited feeding during infancy hoarded more than two and a half times as many pellets as the other set in the post-frustration tests.[1]

It is possible to infer from the experiment on the rats that the early infantile experiences did not produce the expected trait unconditionally, but their fulfilment was contingent on later environmental conditions. It was hunger in these tests that made one set resort to its early experiences.

With the complexity of human needs and modes, the picture of the foundations of human personality becomes more complicated. But whether one follows the psycho-analytical interpretations or follows the framework of a learning theory based on the conditioning of attitudes and interests of children, one cannot ignore the important trends that are stamped on the individual's personality during his early stages of the process of growing up.

In this book, as stated in the introduction, the main concern has been with the general trends and attributes of personality in terms of predictable behaviour. Detailed case studies of individuals with differently constituted personality types would enrich and clarify such diffused and cross-cultural approach. This would reveal how different types of personalities face, handle, and react to the cultural realities, thus either achieving personal adjustment or becoming maladjusted.[2] No one should claim after reading this work that he knows exactly what to expect from every individual in this community, or knows exactly how every one of its members behaves in every situation. The variety and variability of behaviour and action, with which we were not mainly concerned, must not be neglected. Moreover the subjective element and the 'personal equation' of any writer cannot be completely eliminated in the art of writing in social science.

This work represents, moreover, an attempt to study educational issues in the broadest sense of the term, as a function of the cultural tradition that is transmitted to each generation. The 'transmissive' and 'reproductive' role of education in managing and perpetuating cultural organization, maintaining law and order, ways of sanctioning custom and action, have been discussed in this small community. The writer submits that such a type of research is imperative in a society where there are two educational traditions in juxtaposition: the indigenous and the modern. An objective evaluation of the interrelationship between these two traditions must be based on studies of the local culture, as well as an analysis of the aims and achievements of the modern system of schools.[3]

[1] J. McV. Hunt, 'The Effects of Infant Feeding-Frustration upon Adult Hoarding in the Albino Rat', in *Contemporary Psycho-pathology*, ed. by Silvan S. Tomkins, Harvard University Press, 1947, pp. 425–44.

[2] Karen Horney maintains that the child in coping with the world in its process of growing up develops one of three basic strategies of life: it can move towards people, against them, or from them. *Our Inner Conflicts*, New York, 1945.

[3] A strong plea for studies on childhood and educational institutions on those lines has been advanced by Professor Margaret Read in her inaugural lecture on 'Education and Cultural Tradition'. See also her review of 'Umbundu Kinship and Character' by Gladwyn Murray Childs, in *Africa*, Vol. XXI, 1951.

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HERODOTUS, the father of anthropology, might have been surprised to learn that he was destined to number daughters as well as sons among his intellectual progeny. There can be no doubt, however, that Miss Blackman can justly claim to be reckoned in the direct line of his descendants. In Egypt, her chosen field of research, Herodotus gathered some of his most valuable material. His method too was like hers, namely, to take down the traditional lore of the folk as it came fresh and straight from their lips. The ideal collector of folklore must have a genius for hob-nobbing. From lettered priest to unlettered peasant, all classes of the population must be on gossiping terms with him. Of course, he does not plague them with set questions. Though he keeps a note-book handy he does not flourish it in their faces. He makes it his business not so much to talk as to listen. If the soul of the people is to be revealed they must be overheard as, all unconscious of the presence of the stranger, they fuss and chatter about the affairs of the hour—about the prices of the market and the state of the crops, about yesterday's funeral and to-morrow's wedding, about the donkey's sore back and the sore eyes of the baby. The secret, in short, is to observe unobserved. The folklorist should be capable of melting like a disembodied spirit into the atmosphere of the local life. Or, if he is to be noticeable at all, let it at least be in some character that is strictly consonant with his surroundings. Thus Miss Blackman might possibly have preferred to dispense altogether with her widespread reputation for healing power. Yet to go about trailing clouds of contagious virtue was at all events more in keeping with prevailing notions of normal behaviour than if they had happened, say, to be clouds of exotic scent.

Moreover, not only is anthropology the product of friendly relations, but it likewise produces them. I am thinking more especially of the great kindness which Miss Blackman experienced everywhere at the hands of the leading officials of Egypt. They were evidently in full sympathy with her scientific aims. Unfortunately,

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121 114 politics and even religion cannot always avoid conforming to lines of ethnic cleavage too closely to prove wholly effective instruments of mutual understanding. Science, on the other hand, is absolutely disinterested in spirit. Its discoveries are for the whole world to enjoy. There can be no rivalry between the nations as regards their respective shares in the creation of knowledge except in so far as it takes the form of honourable competition in the training of sound scholars. The time is doubtless coming when more Egyptians will come forward as investigators duly educated in the critical use of evidence; and they will be welcome.

121 After all, it is hard to say whether the Egyptians themselves or the rest of the world have more to gain from the study of the age-long history of Egypt and of the no less enduring individuality of 133 its people. The country is self-contained enough, thanks to the geographical barriers that shut in the Nile Valley, to maintain a civilization answering to its own needs. Even ph[illegible]lly the 144 Egyptian type breeds true to itself. As often as racial interm[illegible]ure occurs, the foreign strain would seem to become recessive to the point of extinction. On the other hand, Egypt is situated at the 131 meeting-point of three continents. It presides over the junction 174 of the Western and Eastern water-ways of the Old World. How far its influence has extended, whether by direct or by indirect propagation, at various critical periods of history is a problem, much discussed at the present moment, on which the most distant regions may be able to throw light. Any diffusion of culture, however, tends to fade out toward its circumference, and is only to be fully understood by intensive study at the centre. In the case of Egypt it is possible to grasp the complex nature of the 175 centrifugal force thence set in motion all the more thoroughly because there is literary as well as material evidence at the disposal of the archæologist. Silent monuments, too, often form the only yield of the spade. Even pictures speak at best in riddles. Literature, however, when it came into existence in Egypt or in Mesopotamia could in some measure disclose that ethnic psychology which alone is the key to genuine history.

181 538 Nevertheless, the psychic life of a people is but partially and imperfectly reflected in its literature. Just as in the individual the unconscious part of the mind may be supremely determinative of the total character, so in a community the non-literary and

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largely inarticulate classes may do much by way of help or hindrance to shape its destiny. The people of Egypt, having retained their self-identity unimpaired during at least five millennia, a record which puts all other nations into the shade, can be studied now so as to frame a fair estimate of what, psychologically, they have always been. Miss Blackman's work having been mainly among the folk—that portion of the society whose hidden but none the less active impulses and beliefs govern the making of history as it were from below—she is contributing just what is needed to afford an adequate explanation of Egypt's civilizing activity as a spiritual movement.

A word in conclusion as to the usefulness of the woman anthropologist. She is sympathetic by nature. She is not politically suspect. She can get at the women, who as the educators of the rising generation exercise an immense influence on the formation of mental habits. In short, anthropology is as much a woman's job as a man's. It only remains to add that a woman who wishes to be useful in this way must follow Miss Blackman's example, and go through a suitable training before she enters the field.

R. R. MARETT

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PREFACE

THIS book represents but a small portion of the work upon which I have been engaged in Egypt during the last six years. I have spent, on an average, six months annually in the country, living almost entirely among the *fellāhīn*. I wish to make it quite clear to my readers that the customs and beliefs, and the general manner of life, described in this book represent those of the peasants only; by the upper classes they have, of course, long been discarded. These customs and beliefs are of great importance and interest in themselves, but the fact that most of them are very ancient makes it still more urgent that they should be adequately studied and recorded. Already my researches have thrown light on points hitherto obscure to students of ancient Egypt; hence this book may, I hope, be not only an addition to anthropological knowledge, but also a contribution to Egyptology.

It has been my aim to describe the life of the modern inhabitants of the Nile Valley in the simplest way, avoiding technical language, for my purpose in writing this book has been to interest the general public and present them with a readable and, at the same time, true description of the peasants of Egypt.

I want to emphasize the fact that though the contents of this book form but a tithe of the information I have collected, yet even so I am only at the beginning of my work. Many years of research still lie ahead of me, for the sources of information are very far from exhausted. When my work is more nearly complete my intention is to produce a large and strictly scientific volume on the beliefs and practices and the social and industrial life of the modern Egyptians.

I have endeavoured to be strictly accurate in all my statements. Every custom and belief here dealt with has been most carefully inquired into before I committed it to paper. Nevertheless, those who are experienced field-workers in anthropology know how easy it is to make mistakes and to misunderstand, even after careful investigation, the true inwardness of things. I therefore invite

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● 121 criticism, and I hope that, if I have misunderstood a point, my Egyptian friends will not hesitate to inform me. I am most anxious that educated Egyptians should recognize the importance of the anthropology and folklore of their country, and my earnest hope is that some of them will be persuaded to take up this study. They surely, if they received the proper training, would be best able to undertake anthropological research among their own people. Before very long I much hope that I may see a flourishing anthropological institute established in Cairo, forming a centre for all such research work, not only in Egypt itself, but in adjacent countries—for who knows how far the influence of ancient Egypt has extended? Some writers in England even postulate an almost world-wide diffusion of Egyptian culture!

I have said that I am only at the beginning of my work. I have not as yet touched Lower Egypt, and my idea is to include in my researches not only the whole of Egypt proper, but the Egyptian Oases and Lower Nubia. I must also undertake a far more intensive study of the provinces which I have already visited, carefully recording all local differences. This of course requires many more years of hard work.

The cult of Muslim sheikhs and Coptic saints is a subject in [114] which I have particularly interested myself. I have not dealt with it here in detail, as I hope shortly to bring out a book dealing solely with the beliefs, ceremonies, and mythology connected with these venerated persons.

122 I am glad to have this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks to the Trustees of the Percy Sladen Memorial Fund for the grants which they have made me during the last four years, and to the Royal Society and the Committee for Anthropology in Oxford for supplementary grants. I owe much also to the encouragement and kindly appreciation of my work which I have received from so many in the University and elsewhere, and to the support afforded me by the special committee appointed by the British Association to promote the furtherance of my researches. To the ∞ officials in Egypt and to the Egyptians generally I owe more than I can express. Without the assistance and facilities afforded me by the officials, and the friendliness I have encountered among all classes alike, it would have been quite impossible for me to have accomplished the work I have done. Some of the officials have personally assisted me in my investigations, and the way the

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peasants have welcomed me into their lives has enabled me to get into much closer touch with them than is possible for the ordinary foreigner. I can truly say that the kindness generally that I have received has made the years which I have spent in Egypt the happiest in my life. My desire is that I may be able to continue my work and leave behind me a true record of the many interesting and ancient customs of that most attractive country.

To my brother, Dr A. M. Blackman, I am indebted for all the ancient analogies. Not only so, but he has devoted hours to the careful perusal of my manuscript, and moreover has seen this book through the press and made all the indexes, thus enabling me to carry on uninterruptedly my researches in Egypt. If, therefore, the book achieves any success I feel that much of that success will be due to him.

To the Councils of the Royal Anthropological Institute and of the Folklore Society, to the Committee of the Egypt Exploration Society, to the publishers of *Discovery* (Messrs Benn), and to the editors of *The Manchester Guardian* and *The Evening News* I am indebted for permission to include in this book articles of mine that have already appeared in their various journals and papers.

To Professor J. L. Myres I must here express my sincere thanks for reading through all the proofs in collaboration with my brother; and to Mr E. S. Thomas, late of the Egyptian Ministry of Finance, and now Assistant in the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford, thanks are due for supplying me with better translations of the Arabic charms, etc., than I had before.

All the photographs, I should state, have been taken by myself, with the exception of a few which were taken in 1920 by my friend Mr D. J. V. Forster, of Pembroke College, Oxford, at my request, on the occasions when he was present with me at the ceremonies which they illustrate.

I have purposely suppressed the names of people and villages in nearly every instance as I do not think it would be either desirable or fair (see p. 231) to publish them in a semi-popular book of this kind.

Finally, I should like to point out that with the spread of education the old customs and beliefs are already beginning to die out. It is thus most important that they should be recorded at once, before they suffer complete extinction. I hope, therefore, that my work

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obtains for his business, probably refrained from examining the statement as to age made by the girl's parents.

The childbearing age lasts over a long period, for girls mature early, and it is a common thing in Egypt for a woman of fifty to give birth to a child. From an economic point of view it is probably an advantage that so many of the children die, for otherwise the country would soon become over-populated. What is so desirable is that those who do survive should be brought up in healthier surroundings, both moral and physical, and without the unnecessary suffering inflicted upon them by the ignorance of the mothers.

FIG. 17. YOUNG GIRL DRESSED UP TO ATTRACT A HUSBAND

In spite of the frequently indecent talk on sexual matters, there is a strict moral code, especially with regard to unmarried girls, the infringement of which often entails a terrible punishment. This seems somewhat unfair on the girls, considering the atmosphere in which they are brought up. If a girl has misconducted herself before marriage, and is discovered at marriage to be unchaste, the disgrace to her family is looked upon as such a terrible one that her own parents will often kill her, sometimes taking the unfortunate child—for she is hardly more than a child—into the desert, and there dispatching her, usually, I

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believe, by cutting her throat. Unfaithfulness in a wife may likewise be punished by death, sometimes death by drowning. If her paramour also is caught they may be thrown into the river or a canal together.

The moral standard is very much lower in some villages than others, and I have observed that villages of pure, or comparatively pure, Egyptian stock are more moral sexually, more honest, and less prone to crimes of violence than are those of mixed negro or Arab origin.

In any case, it is not fair to judge these peasants too harshly. Much cannot be expected of them in their present condition of ignorance, and I believe that until the women can be depended on to exercise a purer and higher influence on their society there is not much prospect of the moral tone of the village communities being raised.

In later years a woman, especially if she has sons, has an honourable position in the family. A man's love and respect for his mother is a marked characteristic among Egyptians, and even after marriage the mother retains the highest place in her son's love and respect. Some years ago I was told that if a man ill-treated his mother and did not show her the greatest honour and respect the whole village would consider him a reprobate. In the married son's household his mother reigns supreme, and the wife who does not show proper respect to her mother-in-law usually has no chance of finding favour with her husband. As an old friend of mine, a man who had always had the greatest veneration and love for his mother, once said to me, " My wife is good, and I am pleased with her, but she must remain there [pointing downward]. My mother is up there [pointing upward]. Did she not carry me here for nine months [pressing his hands on his stomach] ? Did she not endure pain to give me birth, and did she not feed me from her breast ? How could I not love her ? She is always first and above all with me. My wife may change and may lose her love for me. My mother is always the same ; her love for me cannot change."

I fear I may seem to have given a very unpleasant impression in many respects of the peasants of Egypt, but I have dwelt on the darker side of the picture at some length not because there is no brighter side, nor because I am lacking in appreciation of the many excellent qualities to be found in most of my village friends. It is

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114 121 because of my real affection for them, and because I very greatly desire to see their lives improved, especially from the moral standpoint, that I venture to speak openly on a subject in which I am much interested—*i.e.*, how to assure a more wholesome childhood and a higher mental training for the girls, so that they may be better and wiser wives and mothers.

114 181 I have every cause to speak of these people with affection, for their courtesy to me has been unbounded, and I have often marvelled at their patience and cheerfulness, even in the midst of poverty and great privations, which they bear with a courage that enforces respect. Their kindness to each other in times of trouble is most marked, and they will as a rule, however poor they may be, share their scanty fare with one whose position may be even worse than their own. This nobler side of their character shows what a fine people they might become were the women, the chief influence in any community, to receive a better training in childhood, a more suitable education, and to have held up before them a higher ideal of life.

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CHAPTER III

PERSONAL DECORATION AND ORNAMENTS

LOVE of personal adornment seems to be instinctive in the human race, and it has probably existed in some form or another as an element in human character from the earliest times. The beautifying of the person may be achieved in a variety of ways, sometimes involving mutilation of the body. A study of the true inwardness of ornaments and personal decoration in general is most instructive, and may serve a useful purpose on occasions, as I hope to show later.

The simple jewellery of the modern Egyptian peasants, and their body-markings, such as tattooing, supply material for an interesting chapter in the study of these people.

The *fellāḥeh* (peasant woman) is by no means more backward than the average Englishwoman in her endeavours to make the most of whatever personal attractions she may possess, and, as I have stated, her demands for gold and silver ornaments may involve her unfortunate husband in considerable financial embarrassment.

The young girl, usually a mere child, who is on the look-out for a husband often wears a necklace of particular shape, made of gold coins. It is quite an attractive ornament, and also serves as an outward and visible sign of her wealth. A man when about to marry may present his bride with such a necklace, investing some of his money in it, for the women's jewellery is often regarded as a safe form of investment, which can easily be turned into ready cash should the necessity arise. Every girl has her ears and nose bored at a fairly early age, when she becomes the proud possessor of a pair of earrings (Fig. 18, bottom), as well as of a nose-ring (Fig. 18, in centre of necklace). These may be of gold or silver, or, in the case of the poorer people, even of brass. Anklets may be of silver-gilt, silver, or some white metal. Bracelets are usually much in request, and are made of glass of various colours (Fig. 18, extreme left and right), of small beads woven together to form a

[Text continues on p. 49]

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CHAPTER X

AGRICULTURE AND HARVEST RITES

THE wealth and prosperity of Egypt is, and always has been, dependent upon the produce of the soil, and the peasants are before everything else agriculturalists, as is also indicated by the Egyptian Arabic word for peasant—*fellāḥ* (plural *fellāḥīn*), meaning one who digs or tills. The peasants, most of whom are quite illiterate, are remarkably clever agriculturalists, and every young boy is well versed in all that pertains to the cultivation of the soil. Their methods are, for the most part, very primitive, though, of course, the present system of storing water and of distributing it over various districts has been adopted comparatively recently, and to maintain it a number of highly trained engineers are required. This book is not concerned with these modern developments, which, indeed, lie beyond the scope of anthropology, but with the ordinary work in the fields, where ancient methods and ancient implements are still largely employed, and ancient customs are still observed.

The cultivated lands in Egypt lie along either bank of the river, without any apparent boundaries, for there are no hedges to divide the fields as in England. To the eye of the ordinary traveller there is nothing to indicate where one man's property ends and another's begins. The fields are broken up into small squares, separated from each other by ridges of earth and narrow trenches. When water is distributed over a given area it is conducted through the trenches into the square plots by making an opening through the ridges which surround them. When the plots have received their due allowance of water the openings are built up again and the stream is directed to another portion of the land.

The greater number of the peasants own or hire small plots which are marked off one from the other by boundary stones stuck into the ground at intervals of six feet or more. Many a village quarrel has arisen over these stones, the removal of a neighbour's landmark being a constant cause of disturbance. If a man, for

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CHAPTER XVIII

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ANALOGIES

I WISH to make it quite clear that in this chapter I am by no means supplying a full list of the ancient analogies with which I am acquainted. My intention is merely to give the reader some idea of the importance of this particular branch of my research. In my strictly scientific account of the *fellāḥīn*, to which I have referred in the Preface, the question of survivals will be dealt with very fully.

As I am shortly publishing a book which deals exclusively with Coptic saints and Muslim sheikhs, to be followed later by a book on modern Egyptian medicine-men and their remedies, I am here omitting all references to the numerous and important survivals connected with the cults of those saints and sheikhs, and I am only just touching on the resemblances of the modern to the ancient magico-medical prescriptions.

An ancient Egyptian town and village must have presented much the same appearance as an Upper Egyptian town and village of to-day.[1] Then as now (pp. 27 f.) the better sort of house had one or more upper stories,[2] was doubtless often whitewashed or colour-washed,[3] and had a staircase probably (as is now frequently the case) of brick, leading from floor to floor and on to the roof, where were erected exactly the same mud granaries (p. 28) as are to be seen there nowadays (see Fig. 154).

On the roof of an ancient as of a modern house were often placed two *malāḳif* (singular *malḳaf*),[4] the ventilators by means of which the north and south wind are conveyed into the house during the hot weather.

[1] See A. M. Blackman, *Luxor and its Temples* (London, 1923), p. 4; T. E. Peet and C. L. Woolley, *The City of Akhenaten*, Part I (London, 1923), p. 54 and note 1.

[2] A. Wiedemann, *Das alte Ägypten* (Heidelberg, 1920), p. 168; A. Erman and H. Ranke, *Aegypten und aegyptisches Leben im Altertum* (Tübingen, 1923), pp. 190 ff.; W. Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altaegyptischen Kulturgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1923), Pl. 60a.

[3] Nina de Garis Davies, *The Tombs of Two Officials of Tuthmosis the Fourth* (London, 1923), Pl. XXXIV, p. 30.

[4] A. Erman and H. Ranke, *op. cit.*, pp. 205 f.; A. Wiedemann, *op. cit.*, p. 168; N. de Garis Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

114 and Arabic, he has taught for many years in Cairo and paid regular visits to a number of elementary schools in the villages of Upper Egypt. He is thus peculiarly fitted to interpret Egypt to the West, and to describe from within the dusty everyday life of the fellaheen, which ninety-nine Europeans out of a hundred must look upon with distant, alien eyes from the windows of a car or railway-carriage.

114 121 As a social document this book is agreed to have no rival, but its theoretical assumptions and conclusions have proved less generally acceptable. In particular Father Ayrout stresses the changelessness of fellah life, though it would be easy to show that in the century and a half which have passed since Napoleon visited Egypt, there has been a process of economic and technical change in the Egyptian countryside which cannot have left the fellah himself unmoved, and is likely in any case to have far-reaching social effects in the decades to come. I have transgressed the limits of a translator's function in revising a passage at the end of the second chapter in which Father Ayrout argues that over-population cannot prove to be a serious problem in Egypt for at least a generation. If the present social and economic set-up remains unchanged, I am convinced that it will. However, since this book was first written the discovery of high-grade iron ore in the desert near Aswan has changed the whole basis of the argument. It will not be long, one hopes, before the great weight of water sustained by the Aswan Dam can be turned into power serving not only to smelt this iron, but also to feed new factories in the Delta, and in due course provide Egypt with an industrial system as productive as her agriculture. This new wealth will make possible not only a higher standard of life for the fellaheen, but also the provision of those educational facilities without which, as Father Ayrout insists, there can be no real progress in the countryside. The sympathy and goodwill towards the fellaheen which a section of the educated classes in Egypt is already beginning to show will then have wider scope and greater effect. Such changes need not destroy, though they may modify, the organic relationship between the fellah and the soil which Father Ayrout values so much.

It often happens that a whole historical period is summed up in a book written at the moment when that period is

passing away. This is true of Lane's *Modern Egyptians* for town-life in the Egyptian middle ages, and we may hope that it will in some sense prove to be true, for the long-unchanging life of the Egyptian countryside, of Father Ayrout's *The Fellaheen*.

* * *

Besides revising the passage mentioned above, I have made some minor changes in the text or appendices, and replaced some of the statistics given in the 1938 edition by more recent figures. Once or twice I have been able to give both pre-war and war-time prices, but the changes in supply and demand during the war years have in any case divested such figures of most of their meaning.

The author's notes have been translated and set at the end of the book, together with a number of additional notes which seemed necessary to clarify certain points.

In transliterating from Arabic to Roman characters, I have tried to be as systematic as possible, but not to the point of discarding spellings already well established in English (e.g. fellaheen for *fellâhîn*), or varying the normal forms of names and titles. However, since Lawrence published his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, inconsistency in transliteration is perhaps not the heinous sin it was.

HILARY WAYMENT
London 1945

nuring, harvesting or irrigation, land-ownership, taxation or the yield per acre. 114

There seemed room, therefore, for a study of the fellah himself which would show him first and foremost as a human being, and consider all these other factors not as he influences them, but as they affect him. This change of perspective should make for a better understanding of Egypt as a whole. 114 121

But the land itself is nothing. Geography may have a place here, but it will be human geography: *homo additus naturae*. And man comes first. Such is human geography as Vidal de la Blache understood it; a science including explanation as well as description, and bordering on psychology and sociology. So without ever separating the tiller of the soil from the earth which sustains and feeds him — for that would be a mutilation — we shall make him the focus of our study.

Our aim then is to portray the fellah's background and the fellah in person; to photograph the very life of these men who humanise the soil of Egypt and in their turn become almost a part of it; and to attempt a description of the contacts which explain their character and personality. 121

To save time, a familiarity with the main facts of the history of Egypt and the outlines of its geography will be taken for granted. A number of excellent works on these subjects have recently been published.

Our enquiry is limited to the fellah in the strict sense of the term, that is to say the farm labourer and small farmer, and does not touch the small craftsmen or the boatmen on the Nile. These are also fellaheen in origin, but their specialisation has given them a different way of life, which deserves a separate study.

We shall speak of the past only when it is necessary, for we are concerned with the fellah as he is today. The present, as we shall soon see, includes the past.

The bibliography, which does not claim to be exhaustive, mentions only those works to which the author has referred for specific points. Egyptian books and periodicals have been preferred where possible, since even if they are not always sufficiently concise or scientific they see Egypt from within, and the information they give, while leaving room for critical discrimination, is at least first-hand.

121 At the same time the author's conclusions are based principally on personal observation over a period of years in various provinces of the Nile Valley. They are based, too, on personal intercourse with people of every rank, and on reflection upon things actually seen and heard.

Thus the work now laid before the public is the result of careful observation and study. This fact has made the writer all the more conscious of its deficiencies.

It is to be hoped, however, that this book will help to raise the question of the fellah in all its seriousness, and so encourage a deeper comprehension of this ancient country.

Here lies the heart of the problem. How are we to explain this physical stability, this changelessness both mental and social, this enduring and extraordinary sameness in a people? 178

The answer lies in the soil. The uniformity of Egyptian art is to be explained by its assimilation to the natural environment. The level ridges and steep cliffs on the edge of the Arabian and the Libyan deserts have produced the long, low, solid outline of the Pharaonic temples, as well as the regular cornice which finishes them. The papyrus, lotus, or reed which grew along the Nile were stylised in the pillars and capitals which we now call papyriform, lotiform, or proto-Doric. 178 121

For ages past an intimate bond, which successive masters of Egypt have used all their powers to draw even tighter, has existed in the Nile Valley, between nature and the human mind.

The fellah stands between the hammer and the anvil, between the soil and the masters of the soil. Yet by the very nature of his life he remains nearer to it than to them; and their hammer-blows beat him yet closer to the ground. This union is so real that the fellah's masters, who are also the owners of the soil, through owning the soil also own the fellah. Thus the fellaheen owe their astonishing uniformity and stability to their close association with an element no less uniform and stable, namely the soil of Egypt. There has grown up between these two a bond which is at once firm and elastic; a balanced and self-sufficient interdependence which no crisis or government can disturb. Here is, in the words of Sully-Prudhomme, "that stern, immemorial wedlock of a land and a people which have made each other". This unbroken contact of people and land has caused a perpetual interplay of action and reaction, of likeness and difference, which strengthens the indissoluble union of the two. On the one hand, we have nature, the physical environment in its broader sense, that is to say the climate and the sunshine and above all the water and loam of the Nile, its flora and its enveloping sands. On the other hand we have man, the social element, that is to say the fellah class, shut in no less by its habits than by its villages; dense, gregarious, but isolated and unorganised, closer to the soil, which it understands, than to the State, of which it knows nothing. 178 121 181

178 But we must at all costs avoid here even the appearance
121 of determinism. The fellah is no more the product of the Egyptian countryside than the countryside is the product of the fellah. There is no question here of inevitability, or any determining influence. Man is free, and this freedom is to be defined as "the power of self-determination".

Man is free, and cultivation remains contingent on his will. There are infinite possibilities, among which the will of man — not of the fellah, but of his master — chooses this or that, according to circumstances. At one time, the vine was grown on Egyptian soil. Grapes make wine, and the
241 veto of the Koran killed the vineyards. Not long ago, vast
249 areas were planted with tobacco, but the Government has now forbidden this. Maize of American origin, and cotton, introduced in the nineteenth century, are now chief among the crops. Tomorrow some new crop may cover the fields. No law of necessity, whether of climate or soil, determines once and for all the agriculture of Egypt; much less, then, human life. At the same time the climate and vegetation of Egypt exert a characteristic influence on those who live in, and on, the country.

181 In the case of the town-dwellers and industrial workers,
183 the bond between nature and man is looser; the impress
132 of the physical environment is softened and neutralised by the
133 stronger social, civic and political influences. This makes these classes less stable, but more progressive.
121

The countryman, on the other hand, is moulded directly by the soil. Febvre justly criticises the generalisations of Ratzel and Brunhes on the influence of physical environment (*); but without granting their theories anything like universal applicability we may recognise that they do apply sufficiently to agricultural communities, and especially to the Egyptian fellaheen.

It will become clear, indeed, that the monotony, uniformity and productiveness of the Nile Valley have their exact counterpart in the characteristics of the fellah community. These two are not parallel but correlative. They meet and crystallise in a distinct manner of life, which is at once a geographical and a social phenomenon. It will also become clear that the water and mud of the Nile enter into and in great part explain the whole life of the fellah, his work and his home, his body and his soul, and impart

to him both their qualities and their defects. It is because the fellah 'buries' himself in this mud that it has become so fertile. Egypt, gift of the Nile, is no less a gift of the fellah. It is because this soil has incarnated itself in the fellah that he himself is so enduring, but also so material, so stagnant. 181 183 132 133 121

Progress then must come from some form of release, of emergence, from education in the original sense of drawing out potentialities. The true duty of society is to liberate the fellah's spirit from its stifling envelope of mud; to free him from the defects of the soil, while leaving him its good qualities. The initiative can never come from his own community, which is completely numbed and powerless, but only from the classes which overshadow him, from the *élite*, who with their riches of mind and money can vitalise him. In this dough must work the leaven of intelligence and sympathy.

The following chapters will illustrate in detail these general remarks, and bring us by the logic of facts to the human conclusion which we have here outlined.

121 The aim of this chapter was not to re-formulate the geography and ethnography of Egypt; for that it would need to be considerably amplified, and illustrated with maps. It was meant to reveal the interdependence of land and people, and so lead to the study of the men who make the land what it is, and are to some extent moulded by it themselves — the fellaheen.

181 and mistrust. He puts up with the cruellest treatment from them, and they, despising him as they do, whether they be Egyptians or foreigners, believe that such methods are a necessity.

181 565 694 A rich landowner of my acquaintance, an excellent fellow at heart, declared: 'The fellaheen must be driven with the lash.' A *mohwen* of the police who, as I entered his office, was raining blows on a man up for trial replied to my expression of astonishment: 'This is how you have to treat them. They are beasts.'

369 So great is the cleavage between town and country, between the still uncivilised fellah and the more or less Westernised townsman, that the gulf is neither narrow nor recent. In a private letter written three centuries before Christ these words are found: 'Do not take me for an Egyptian fellah.' Then as now the representatives of the town appeared in the village only to take their rents, or to levy the taxes due to the State [19].

121 We are not for the moment discussing the fellah's psychology; but it must be said in conclusion to this chapter that although he is much sought after as a taxpayer or producer he is still unknown as a man and neglected as a citizen.

565 The political and economic pyramid of Egypt bears down with all its weight on the fellah. The oligarchy at the top may have changed its form, but pressure at the base, that is on the fellah, has been little relieved.

His ignorance, his isolation, his bondage to the soil, prevent him from putting up any resistance to this crushing burden; and it is a burden which moulds his whole life.

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
MR13 Fellahin MR13

Chapter IV

THE FELLAH AT WORK

The preceding chapters have given a general picture of the physical and social environment of the Egyptian peasantry. Thus the problem has been stated and approached. We can now attack it directly, by considering the fellah himself, first of all at the work from which he derives his name. 121

The Arabic word *fellàh*, which has passed into most modern languages, is the intensive adjective of the verb *fàlaha*, which means to till the ground, labour or toil. 101

As the reader will have already observed, the fellah is looked upon primarily, if not exclusively, as a 'hand' or agricultural machine. As "economic man", he is equated with labour. 186 369

The work of the fellah, even more than his physical and mental make-up or his habitat, is determined by the double environment we have been considering. It seems in fact the mere consequence of the opportunities and limitations created by the soil and by society. His work will thus lead us to the consideration of the fellah as a human being, for it is he who in return carries on the work of the soil and adapts it to human needs. We have here a clear case of reciprocal interaction. 121 183

1. Methods of Work

The dark soil is not only productive, but also exacting from one year's end to another. The fellah, who is not obliged by the Koran to take a weekly day of rest, works the whole year round, and takes a holiday only at the great festivals, that is to say about ten days in a twelvemonth. 134 461

The sun shines for at least eleven hours a day, and in May, June and July nearer fifteen. The fellah spends by far the greater part of his time in the fields, and for some kinds of work stays there all night. 132 461

provided these show real cordiality and interest and have come to see the fellaheen for their own sake. 183 185

The same task belongs, by virtue of their very function, to teachers and ministers of religion, who enter more deeply into the life of the village. Whoever assists them in their work shows the most intelligent form of patriotism. 748

The wives and daughters of landowners are also specially called to this task. One young girl of good family who spends her holidays in the country and is sensitive to the people's needs has been able quite alone to gather all the fellaheen of the *'ezba* and, by telling them stories every evening, to educate them and generally raise their standards. This is true feminism at work. [538]

The essential problem, then, is to undertake and carry through a task of education and enlightenment, which is more a matter of personal understanding and personal service than of committees, speeches and official decrees.

The only thing that can awaken without exciting, help without weakening, free without uprooting the fellaheen is a socially-minded and altruistic spirit in the upper classes. It is from above that a beginning must be made.

There could be no fitter conclusion to this book than a quotation from the great Pope Pius XI (21):

"Your duty is to afford the worker both material and spiritual help : material help, by so acting that not only legal justice may work on his behalf, but also social justice; that is to say, that he may benefit from all those institutions that have as their aim the betterment of the conditions of the working classes : spiritual help, by giving them the aid of religion, without which they will live immersed in a brutalising and degrading materialism .... There are millions of human beings living in conditions so pitiful and so wretched that they do not even enjoy the minimum of well-being necessary for the preservation of human dignity." 121

[page 160 is blank]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

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1860. There is also *Al-Damīrī's Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān* (trans. by Jayakar, and published by Luzac & Co., London, 1906–8), an entertaining zoological lexicon which has embedded in it many curious instances of Moslem folk-medicine. 113

To confine our attention to Egypt, however, without doubt a great deal could be done by a cultured Egyptian student of folk-customs to collect these age-old, but fast dying, practices. A stranger can seldom hope to obtain, unless after many years' residence among, and constant intercourse with, the natives, that insight into their mentality which is necessary for such a study. Hence the work, here presented in an English garb, should be of no little value to students of folklore, and indeed to all interested in human thought and waywardness, since education, in general, and medical science, in particular, have both made rapid progress of recent years in Egypt, and the Egyptian Government's proposal to establish hospitals and dispensaries throughout the country will do much to eradicate the "cures" of the Old Wives and the village charlatans. So the day is coming, we hope, when the dangerous "remedies" of the modern Nile Dwellers will be no longer practised, but will be relegated to the archives of human error. As such the instances recorded in the present book should have increasing historical value. 114 121

The Arabic original is now out of print—in fact the British Museum possesses only Part I—but by this rendering into English of the relevant parts it is hoped that the material will be made more accessible than it otherwise would be. The translation has not been without difficulties. Besides being unvocalized throughout, as well as faulty in style, the Arabic text is none too well printed, and there are several textual errors. Still another difficulty that presents itself to a non-medical reader, is the exact rendering into English of the many medical terms used. Unfortunately the great Dictionary of Medical Terms compiled by Dr. Sharaf,[1] which has proved very helpful, is only English-Arabic and not *vice versa*. This has necessitated a great deal of search and rectification. It is to be hoped that the medical equivalents are not too glaringly [113]

[1] *An English-Arabic Dictionary of Medicine, Biology and Allied Sciences* by Dr. Mohammed Sharaf, Cairo, Government Press, 1926 (1st edition).

inaccurate. Even so, they do not detract from the real value or purpose of the book, which is to present to English readers a conspectus of the magic and diablerie still common amongst the illiterate villagers of Egypt. Soon they will be lost, buried with the past, and unable to be exhumed like the relics of the dead Pharaohs.

The notes added by the translator, as well as the pagination of the original text, are given within square brackets. In the matter of the transliteration the system of the Royal Asiatic Society is generally employed, except that ḳ = ق, and ء is not transliterated except when followed by a vowel. Standardized words such as *Koran* and *Allah* I have left in that state. Colloquial forms, which abound throughout the work, are given usually as near to the current pronunciation as is needful. I have ordinarily transliterated غ by g, but I have considered it unnecessary, however, to indicate the Cairene pronunciation of the ق (ḳ) as a glottal stop. Besides hitherto unrecorded charms or magic spells, the Arabic text also contains numerous words and phrases which are not usually, or readily, found in the standard dictionaries. From a lexicographical point of view it has been considered worth while to indicate these.

The author, as Dr. Macdonald noted, "writes with the indignation of the qualified medical practitioner." The burden of his tale may well be summed up in the following lines:

> "If you have cancer or nephritis,
> Diabetes or bronchitis,
> Heart disease, tuberculosis,
> Or liver hardening with cirrhosis,
> The doctor will, for sure, detect them,
> And early treatment may correct them."

Hence he is very particular in all cases to add the canonical medical treatment as an antidote to the popular superstitious practices which he so scathingly records. He is also at pains to mention those drugs and herbs which are easily procurable by the Egyptian natives. As these sections are of no value as folklore it has been considered advisable to omit them in the interests of brevity, especially in these days of expensive

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publication. For the same reason a number of sections in which the author rambles into the realm of politics, and the particular condemnation of the foreign occupation of the Nile Valley, have been passed over. The value of the book lies, not in these, perhaps pardonable, divagations, but in the faithfully recorded cases of popular folk-medicine and "curative" malpractices which existed, and still do exist, among the peasantry of modern Egypt.

Before the author begins his introduction on page 4 of the Arabic text, his brother 'Āmir Ismā'īl prefaces the work with two pages of explanation which may be summarized as follows. It is laudable for a man, he philosophizes, to make himself acquainted with the customs and habits of his own nation so that he may wisely choose whatever in them is beneficial. All races possess superstitious practices which they have inherited from the past, and which continue to persist because they have not been sufficiently combated. This was the reason why the author, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ismā'īl, was impelled to compile the present work in the days when he was a student in Cairo. His object firstly, was to collect instances of superstitious medical practices amongst the common people, and secondly, to denounce the village quacks and the "old wives" who traded in such things. After the work had been published in the periodical called *al-Ādāb*,[1] it was suggested that when it appeared as an independent treatise it should mention the proper medical remedies, and those herbs most easily procurable by the natives themselves. This was done but, as has already been noted above, these passages are omitted in the present translation since they are unnecessary. It has also been considered advisable to modify somewhat the rather grandiose language of the author and express the sense in a more familiar English idiom. At the same time it has been felt that it would be a pity to remove altogether the flavour of the original Arabic, and, in consequence, where the phraseology is sufficiently picturesque to justify it, the rendering is as literal as is compatible with clarity.

[1] A Cairo publication. See M. Hartmann: *The Arabic Press of Egypt*, Luzac & Co., London, 1899, page 63.

PART ONE

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

To those who wish to investigate the secret of the folk-medicine of the modern Egyptians, we offer new data which we have obtained after diligent search and careful scrutiny. For it is a secret which those who have it treasure, and take care not to divulge, as if it were the philosopher's stone or the *arcanum* of alchemy. Yet, if it were among the actualities which are corroborated by scientific proof and intellectual evidence, impostors would not hide it behind veils of falsehood, nor gild it for the minds of simple people, who trust in it and consider it a heavenly thing and a divine science. I am referring to a low trade and mean occupation, which charlatans engage in as a means of obtaining spoil and as a source of plunder. Indeed we ought rather to designate them as public robbers because they go round the countryside sometimes in company, sometimes alone, so that no village is free from their mischief, nor does any land escape from their guile. Some of them disguise themselves in the garb of pious derwishes and of learned *ulemas*. Others make the speaking in a foreign language the snare by which they appropriate much of the property of those whose strength has been reduced by diseases, and who are ignorant even to-day of the methods of physicians and of the water-holes of healing.

It is strange that the only thing one can understand from the jargon of these swindlers is that apparently they have devoted their lives to the extraction of the treasures of spiritual sciences. So that, when they say anything, you see simple folk welcoming them and magnifying their value. And they have no excuse for so doing, except that the roots of these follies have for long been planted in their thoughts. They have been scared by the tales of the "old women" whose

[Page 14 is blank]

832 with her has a nervous illness, due to the Jinn, she recites the
782 charm herself along with some modification in the forms of the
789 commands that issue from her Ladyship the *Shaikha*, with a slight revision of their clauses.

789 [p. 7.] *The true Explanation.* When I wrote my chapters
789 in Part One on Fraternizing with the Jinn (p. 32 ff) and on the
121 *Nazīl* (p. 30 f), I wrote them in the true belief that the Jinn could not be enslaved. That was after I studied many terrifying books in the Khedivial Library in the Darb al-Gamāmīz (Cairo)[1] constituting almost a quarter of its contents. But I was not the only one who sought what was new, out of a natural love for study which is innate in mankind. For there reached me treatises printed recently in Europe in different languages, whose authors talked about a new subject which they named Spiritism, that is, Spiritualism, or the power of employing spirits. The authors all agreed in what they related of their experiences, or what reached their ears from trustworthy sources, that it is possible to employ the immaterial in the destiny of the material. They differed only at this juncture as to whether they are animal electric rays, or spirits (Jinn) bewitching by the power of incensing and special incantations. Our objection to the holders of the former belief is that they are unable to employ these rays to influence either a person whom the medium (" influencer ") has not seen, or the medium himself. It is as if someone asked the " enchanter " to influence someone whom neither of the two knew, but [p. 8] whose name alone they heard. In spite of this they mention in their treatises that it is possible to employ this spirit for any purpose whatsoever in the case of any person they wish, whether known to them, or unknown.

As for the case of a known person, we agree with their belief,
754 since we have seen in the matter of Envy (see Part One, p. 78) what accounts for that.

791 As for the holders of the second belief, namely the employ-
781 ment of spirits (or Jinn) by a special way, would that I knew what to say to-day to the learned ones of the civilised world who, until ten years ago, used to lay it down that knowledge was preceded by reason and fortified by experience. But " in

[1] [Now called the Royal Library and located at Bāb al-Khalk. Tr.]

this case the supernatural does not enter under this definition." To-day they have brought forward theories seeking to convince their readers of their truth. In reality, they are not the first fruits of their civilisation, nay, the Arabs of Pre-Islamic days said so thousands of years ago. And they say that Ḍaḥḥāk al-Fihrī, one of the petty kings of the Pre-Islamic days killed during one of his raids, three daughters of an old seeress. So she made to appear on his back as a punishment for that, a spreading ulcer with a fierce itch which could not be soothed unless by the application of human brains [p. 9] upon it. It was not long until the ulcer opened its mouth and swallowed its food. And if Ḍaḥḥāk was slow, a voice shouted from the ulcer: Bring my food! or if not, I will slay you! On account of this he destroyed a great number of his subjects. They explain that it was so because the seeress did what she did in the body of Ḍaḥḥāk in order to be avenged on him, first by punishment, and lastly by his death at the hands of his subjects, a great number of whom he destroyed.

There is also the well-known story of 'Abīd ibn al-Abraṣ[1] with the serpent who was burning with thirst and he gave him water to drink. Then it appeared to him after two days in the form of a camel, when his own camel had gone astray, and he recited to it the well-known poem, part of which runs:

> "Goodness survives even if the time be long;
> But Evil is the worst thing with which to provide yourself."

In short, since these pagan tales were not certified as true, and since the *Shabshaba* and the experiments of Spiritism were accompanied by the use of narcotic substances (for we have seen that *ḥashīsh* formed a part of the incense of the *Shaikha Khadra*; and the Italian M——— says in his treatise on Spiritism that consorting with women and indulging in debauchery, and using *ḥashīsh* and intoxicants all help to produce at once wonderful spiritual results) then we say that perhaps the matter has been confused in the mind of the experimenters. Thus they think their imaginings are real, and they distinguish

[1] [A well-known Pre-Islamic poet at the Lakhmid Court at al-Ḥīra. Tr.]

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in their phantasies "helpers" (*A'wān*) and spirits (*Jinn*), and they picture mighty happenings which were accomplished at the hands of spirits [p. 11] by those incantations and names, during the absence of their reason in the smoke of *ḥashīsh*; just as the *Shaikha Khadra* and her colleagues used *ḥashīsh* in incensing only to stupefy the "remnant" of reason in the woman whom the devils of slander and defamation have deceived. Thus there appears to her eyes, what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the reason of any rational being verified.

II

THE KAMARA,[1] OR OPHTHALMIC HOSPITALS IN THE VILLAGES

ALLAH Most High created no land whose people needed to take more care of their eyes than our own land of Egypt, on account of its inhabitants being so subject to dangerous ophthalmia. But He decreed upon the land in past times the lack of many doctors, who are the mainstay of health. Thus the sick, including those suffering from eye-disease, were compelled to appeal to quacks among the ignorant people. With the passage of time the decree of custom became fixed in the minds of the people up to the present time, when medicine has so obviously progressed. Yet we still see great crowds visiting these false physicians to be cured, on the outbreak of diseases. But they only add to their danger and place heavy stumbling blocks [p. 12] in front of the doctor on the day when their "cure" ends in failure, and the patient comes to the cities to be cured of his illness.

In the Gharbīya district there is a woman in a village named *Minyat Ganāḥ*, who has made her house an ophthalmic hospital. Ignorant women seek her out from every quarter, in connection with their different eye-troubles. She has one method to

[1] [It is named in some provinces the *Shifa*.]

4: Walker E-4 (no date) 1934 MR13 Fellahin MR13
(ca. 1890)

FOLK MEDICINE IN MODERN EGYPT

EPILOGUE

MANY students have forced us to complete the printing of the Second Part of the *Ṭibb al-Rukka*, or "Old Wives' Medicine" by publishing what we have gathered in addition in the interval. Since our researches have been generally concerning the experiences of women in Lower Egypt, it is our hope that, in course of time when we have visited the regions of Upper Egypt, we may gather something of their customs and "cures." We leave this, if Allah pleases, as well as the "prescriptions" of the people of Lower Egypt, to Part III. And Allah is responsible if our work becomes useful and beneficial.

(The end of Part II. Part III follows it and begins with "The Congress of Quacks.")[1]

[1] [This Third Part, so far as I have been able to ascertain, was never published, and if ever finished, its present existence is unknown. Tr.]

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
MR13 Fellahin MR13
Upper Egypt

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The little collection which I herewith publish, doubtless makes known for the first time, a considerable series of songs of the peasants of Upper Egypt; for, as far as I know, there has, hitherto, been printed here and there, only an occasional song, for the most part of no particular content.

Although I hope that my book may also furnish material scientifically available, yet this has not been the motive for its publication. It is not intended as a book for scholars. I trust its perusal may be a pleasure to all travelers on the Nile, and to those who may be preparing themselves for the journey thither, as well as to any others who, upon their return home, would gladly be again reminded of the country and the people. Moreover, it may, perhaps, help all such to learn somewhat better how our brown friends think and feel, than it is possible to do by the mere reading of descriptions. For here the people themselves speak, and in words which were not calculated for their effect upon Europeans. Indeed, I think many will be pleasantly surprised by these songs. Of course they are of unequal merit, but I

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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Upper Egypt

once fixed, he would patiently repeat it four or five times for correction, and proved himself an excellent commentator, in spite of some misconceptions, which, undoubtedly, may have slipped in. He could neither read nor write, which fact I think was, for my purpose, very fortunate; and I was glad, also, that he knew no other language than his own. It is a pleasure to recall the time, when I spent the greater part of my leisure moments, squatting before the low, reed-covered watchman's-hut, built of the stones from the debris of the excavations, while I looked into the alert face of the one-eyed, old man, and talked with him. I wrote down the songs at once in the transliteration. Only in the case of doubtful words, in order to make certain of the consonants, did I employ a scribe to take down the Arabic at Maḥmûds dictation.[1] I hope, therefore, to be able to offer a comparatively reliable Arabic text. Maḥmûd declared decidedly several times, that none of the songs was composed by himself. The title of my book, therefore, must not be misunderstood; it is intended only to state, that it presents the entire fund of songs which Maḥmûd knew. They are songs which are

[1]) It is a veritable cross, that the uneducated scribes, who never pronounce the qāf, either do not write it at all, or indicate it by the alif. Because of this, many words are disfigured beyond recognition. It was a great help to me, to have among our workmen, several from Quft in Upper Egypt, who pronounce the qāf like hard g. In doubtful cases I had them repeat the words in question, and could thus determine the lacking qāfs.

8:Schaefer A-5 (1900-1901) 1904
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461 kept strict time, accenting the beats, which, just as
533 in ancient times, were, besides, often marked by clapping the hands and stamping the feet. The songs of the boys, who, 4500 years ago were occupied in building our temple of the sun, will not have sounded very differently.

114 Although I collected the songs at Sa"āra (Saq-
171 qāra), it is, of course, not to be inferred, that they
121 all originated there, or that they are not sung elsewhere. In some cases it could be determined, that knowledge of them extended to Cairo and even to the sea between Egypt and Palestine. It is worthy of note, that several songs which others endeavored to contribute, were refused by Maḥmûd with the words: "No, those are not peasant songs." It will be very interesting to determine the geographical range of the songs, when once collections of songs from other places have been published, with exact indications of their provenience.[1] As they are songs in the Arabic language, there will be evident similarities with Arabic songs from countries outside of Egypt, in spite of their being quite distinct in general character from the non-Egyptian songs with which
114 I am acquainted. The only time which I had at my disposal for writing down the songs, were the few free hours which the work of excavation, with

[1]) F. Kern informs me, that some of the songs, with variations, are contained in the collection: Qaṭâif el-laṭâif, printed in Cairo. In the detailed treatment which he is preparing, he will follow the occurrence of our songs in vulgar Arabic texts both printed and manuscript.